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VOL. XIV.

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CLARISSA;

OR, THE

HISTORY

OF A

YOUNG LADY.

COMPREHENDING

THE MOST IMPORTANT CONCERNS

OF

PRIVATE LIFE.

AND PARTICULARLY SHEWING

THE DISTRESSES THAT MAY ATTEND THE MISCONDUCT

BOTH OF

PARENTS AND CHILDREN,

IN RELATION TO MARRIAGE.

BY MR. SAMUEL RICHARDSON.

IN EIGHT VOLUMES.

LONDON:
Printed for HARRISON and Co. No. 18, Paternoster-Row.
M DCC LXXXIV.

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PREFACE.

THE following Hiſtory is given in a Series of Letters, written principally in a double yet ſeparate correſpondence;

Between two young ladies of virtue and honour, bearing an inviolable friendſhip for each other, and writing not merely for amuſement, but upon the moſt *intereſting* ſubjects; in which every private family, more or leſs, may find itſelf concerned: And,

Between two gentlemen of free lives; one of them glorying in his talents for ſtratagem and invention, and communicating to the other, in confidence, all the ſecret purpoſes of an intriguing head and reſolute heart.

But here it will be proper to obſerve, for the ſake of ſuch as may apprehend hurt to the morals of youth, from the more freely-written letters, that the gentlemen, though profeſſed libertines as to the female ſex, and making it one of their wicked maxims to keep no faith with any of the individuals of it who are thrown into their power, are not, however, either infidels or ſcoffers; nor yet ſuch as think themſelves freed from the obſervance of thoſe other moral duties which bind man to man.

On the contrary, it will be found, in the progreſs of the work, that they very often make ſuch reflections upon each other, and each upon himſelf and his own actions, as reaſonable beings *muſt* make, who diſbelieve not a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments, and who one day propoſe to reform—One of them actually reforming, and by that means giving an opportunity to cenſure the freedoms which fall from the gayer pen and lighter heart of the other.

And yet that other, although in unboſoming himſelf to a ſelect friend, he diſcover wickedneſs enough to entitle him to general deteſtation, preſerves a decency, as well in his images as in his language, which is not always to be found in the works of ſome of the moſt celebrated modern writers, whoſe ſubjects and characters have leſs warranted the liberties they have taken.

In the letters of the two young ladies, it is preſumed, will be found not only the higheſt exerciſe of a reaſonable and *practicable* friendſhip, between minds endowed with the nobleſt principles of virtue and religion, but, occaſionally interſperſed, ſuch delicacy of ſentiments, particularly with regard to the other ſex; ſuch inſtances of impartiality, each freely, as a fundamental principle of their friendſhip, blaming, praiſing, and ſetting right, the other, as are ſtrongly to be recommended to the obſervation of the *younger* part (more eſpecially) of female readers.

The principal of theſe two young ladies is propoſed as an exemplar to her ſex: nor is it any objection to her being ſo, that ſhe is not in all reſpects a perfect character. It was not only natural, but it was neceſſary, that ſhe ſhould have ſome faults, were it only to ſhew the reader how laudably ſhe could miſtruſt and blame herſelf, and carry to her own heart, diveſted of ſelf-partiality, the cenſure which aroſe from her own convictions, and that even to the acquittal of thoſe, becauſe revered characters, whom no one elſe would acquit, and to whoſe much greater faults her errors were owing, and not to a weak or reproachable heart. As far as is conſiſtent with human frailty, and as far as ſhe could be perfect, conſidering the people ſhe had to deal with, and thoſe with

with whom she was inseparably connected, she *is* perfect. To have been impeccable, must have left nothing for the Divine Grace and a purified state to do, and carried our idea of her from woman to angel. As such is she often esteemed by the man whose *heart* was so corrupt, that he could hardly believe human nature capable of the purity which, on every trial or temptation, shone out in *hers*.

Besides the four principal persons, several others are introduced, whose letters are characteristick: and it is presumed that there will be found in some of them, but more especially in those of the chief character among the men, and the second character among the women, such strokes of gaiety, fancy, and humour, as will entertain and divert; and at the same time both warn and instruct.

All the letters are written while the hearts of the writers must be supposed to be wholly engaged in their subjects, (the events at the time generally dubious;) so that they abound not only with critical situations, but with what may be called *instantaneous* descriptions and reflections, (proper to be brought home to the breast of the youthful reader;) as also with affecting conversations; many of them written in the dialogue or dramatick way.

'*Much more* lively and affecting,' says one of the principal characters, (Vol. VII.) 'must be the stile of those who write in the height of a '*present* distress, the mind tortured by the pangs of uncertainty, (the 'events then hidden in the womb of fate;) *than* the dry, narrative, un-'animated stile of a person relating difficulties and dangers surmounted, 'can be; the relater perfectly at ease; and if himself unmoved by his 'own story, not likely greatly to affect the reader.'

What will be found to be more particularly aimed at in the following work, is—To warn the inconsiderate and thoughtless of the one sex against the base arts and designs of specious contrivers of the other—To caution parents against the undue exercise of their natural authority over their children in the great article of marriage—To warn children against preferring a man of pleasure to a man of probity, upon that dangerous but too commonly received notion, *that a reformed rake makes the best husband*—But, above all, to investigate the highest and most important doctrines not only of morality, but of christianity, by shewing them thrown into action in the conduct of the *worthy* characters; while the *unworthy*, who set those doctrines at defiance, are condignly, and, as may be said, consequentially, punished.

From what has been said, considerate readers will not enter upon the perusal of the piece before them, as if it were designed *only* to divert and amuse. It will probably be thought tedious to all such as *dip* into it, expecting a *light Novel*, or *transitory Romance*; and look upon story in it (interesting as that is generally allowed to be) as it's *sole end*, rather than as a vehicle to the instruction.

Different persons, as might be expected, have been of different opinions, in relation to the conduct of the heroine in particular situations; and several worthy persons have objected to the general catastrophe, and other parts of the history. Whatever is thought material of these shall be taken notice of, by way of POSTSCRIPT, at the conclusion of the History; for this work being addressed to the publick as a History of *Life* and *Manners*, those parts of it which are proposed to carry with them the force of an example, ought to be as unobjectionable as is consistent with the *design of the whole*, and with *human nature*.

SONNET.

SONNET,

TO THE AUTHOR OF CLARISSA,

O Maſter of the heart! whoſe magick ſkill
The cloſe receſſes of the ſoul can find,
Can rouze, becalm, and terrify the mind,
Now melt with pity, now with anguiſh thrill;

Thy moral page while virtuous precepts fill,
Warm from the heart, to mend the age deſign'd,
Wit, ſtrength, truth, decency, are all combin'd
To lead our youth to good, and guard from ill.

O long enjoy what thou ſo well haſt won,
The grateful tribute of each honeſt heart,
Sincere, nor hackney'd in the ways of men;
At each diſtreſsful ſtroke their true tears run;
And Nature, unſophiſticate by art,
Owns and applauds the labours of thy pen.

NAMES

NAMES OF THE PRINCIPAL PERSONS,

Miſs CLARISSA HARLOWE, a young lady of great beauty and merit.

Robert Lovelace, Eſq. her admirer.

James Harlowe, Eſq. father of Clariſſa.

Mrs. Harlowe, his lady.

James Harlowe, their only ſon.

Arabella, their elder daughter.

John Harlowe, Eſq. elder brother of James Harlowe, ſenior.

Antony Harlowe, third brother.

Roger Solmes, Eſq. an admirer of Clariſſa, favoured by her friends.

Mrs. Hervey, half-ſiſter of Mrs. Harlowe.

Miſs Dolly Hervey, her daughter.

Mrs. Judith Norton, a woman of great piety and diſcretion, who had a principal ſhare in the education of Clariſſa.

Col. William Morden, a near relation of the Harlowes.

Miſs Howe, the moſt intimate friend, companion, and correſpondent, of Clariſſa.

Mrs. Howe, her mother.

Charles Hickman, an admirer of Miſs Howe.

Lord M. uncle to Mr. Lovelace.

Lady Sarah Sadlier, and Lady Betty Lawrance, half-ſiſters of Lord M.

Miſs Charlotte, and Miſs Patty Montague, nieces of the ſame nobleman.

Dr. Lewen, a worthy divine.

Mr. Elias Brand, a pedantick young clergyman.

Dr. H. an humane phyſician.

Mr. Goddard, an honeſt and ſkilful apothecary.

John Belford, Eſq. Mr. Lovelace's principal intimate and confidante.

Richard Mowbray, Thomas Doleman, James Tourville, and Thomas Belton, Eſquires, libertine friends of Mr. Lovelace.

Mrs. More, a widow, keeping a lodging-houſe at Hampſtead.

Miſs Rawlins, a notable young gentlewoman there.

Mrs. Bevis, a lively young widow of the ſame place.

Mrs. Sinclair, the pretended name of a private brothel-keeper at London.

Captain Tomlinſon, the aſſumed name of a vile pander to the debaucheries of Mr. Lovelace.

Sally Martin, and Polly Horton, aſſiſtants of, and partners with, the infamous Sinclair.

Dorcas Wykes, an artful ſervant at the vile houſe.

THE

THE

HISTORY

OF

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

LETTER I.

MISS ANNA HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

JAN. 10.

I Am extremely concerned, my deareſt friend, for the diſturbances that have happened in your family. I know how it muſt hurt you to become the ſubject of the publick talk: and yet, upon an occaſion ſo generally known, it is impoſſible but that whatever relates to a young lady, whoſe diſtinguiſhed merits have made her the publick care, ſhould engage every-body's attention. I long to have the particulars from yourſelf; and of the uſage I am told you receive upon an accident you could not help; and in which, as far as I can learn, the ſufferer was the aggreſſor.

Mr. Diggs the ſurgeon, whom I ſent for at the firſt hearing of the rencounter, to enquire, for *your* ſake, how your brother was, told me that there was no danger from the wound, if there were none from the fever; which, it ſeems, has been increaſed by the perturbation of his ſpirits.

Mr. Wyerley drank tea with us yeſterday; and though he is far from being partial to Mr. Lovelace, as it may be well ſuppoſed, yet both he and Mr. Symmes blame your family for the treatment they gave him when he went in perſon to enquire after your brother's health, and to expreſs his concern for what had happened.

They ſay, That Mr. Lovelace could not avoid drawing his ſword; and that either your brother's unſkilfulneſs or paſſion left him from the very firſt paſs entirely in his power.

This, I am told, was what Mr. Lovelace ſaid upon it, retreating as he ſpoke: 'Have a care, Mr. Harlowe!—Your 'violence puts you out of your de'fence—you give me too much advan'tage. For your ſiſter's ſake, I will paſs 'by every thing—if—'

But this the more provoked his raſhneſs, to lay himſelf open to the advantage of his adverſary; who, after a ſlight wound given him in the arm, took away his ſword.

There are people who love not your brother, becauſe of his natural imperiouſneſs and fierce and uncontroulable temper: theſe ſay, That the young gentleman's paſſion was abated on ſeeing his blood guſh plentifully down his arm; and that he received the generous offices of his adverſary (who helped him off with his coat and waiſtcoat, and bound up his arm till the ſurgeon could come) with ſuch patience, as was far from making a viſit afterwards from that adverſary to enquire after his health, appear either inſulting or improper.

Be this as it may, every-body pities you. So ſteady, ſo uniform, in your

conduct; ſo deſirous, as you always ſaid, of ſliding through life to the end of it unnoted; and, as I may add, not wiſhing to be obſerved even for your ſilent benevolence; ſufficiently happy in the noble conſciouſneſs which attends it: *rather uſeful than glaring*, your deſerved motto; though now, to your regret, puſhed into blaze, as I may ſay; and yet blamed at home for the faults of others—How muſt ſuch a virtue ſuffer on every hand!—Yet, it muſt be allowed that your preſent trial is but proportioned to your prudence.

As all your friends without doors are apprehenſive that ſome other unhappy event may reſult from ſo violent a contention, in which, it ſeems, the families on both ſides are now engaged, I muſt deſire you to enable me, on the authority of your own information, to do you occaſional juſtice.

My mother, and all of us, like the reſt of the world, talk of nobody but you on this occaſion, and of the conſequences which may follow from the reſentments of a man of Mr. Lovelace's ſpirit; who, as he gives out, has been treated with high indignity by your uncles. My mother will have it, that you cannot now, with any decency, either ſee him, or correſpond with him: ſhe is a good deal prepoſſeſſed by your uncle Antony; who occaſionally calls upon us, as you know; and, on this rencounter, has repreſented to her the crime which it would be in a ſiſter to encourage a man who is to wade into her favour (this was his expreſſion) through the blood of her brother.

Write to me, therefore, my dear, the whole of your ſtory from the time that Mr. Lovelace was firſt introduced into your family; and particularly an account of all that paſſed between him and your ſiſter, about which there are different reports; ſome people ſcrupling not to inſinuate that the younger ſiſter has ſtolen a lover from the elder: and, pray, write in ſo full a manner as may ſatisfy thoſe who know not ſo much of your affairs as I do. If any-thing unhappy ſhould fall out from the violence of ſuch ſpirits as you have to deal with, your account of all things *previous* to it will be your beſt juſtification.

You ſee what you draw upon yourſelf by excelling all your ſex: every individual of it who knows you, or has heard of you, ſeems to think you anſwerable to *her* for your conduct in points ſo very delicate and concerning.

Every eye, in ſhort, is upon you with the expectation of an example. I wiſh to Heaven you were at liberty to purſue your own methods; all would then, I dare ſay, be eaſy, and honourably ended: but I dread your directors and directreſſes; for your mother, admirably well qualified as ſhe is to lead, muſt ſubmit to be led. Your ſiſter and brother will certainly put you out of your courſe.

But this is a point you will not permit me to expatiate upon: pardon me, therefore, and I have done. Yet, why ſhould I ſay pardon me, when your concerns are my concerns—when your honour is my honour—when I love you as never woman loved another—and when you have allowed of that concern and of that love, and have for years, which in perſons ſo young may be called many, ranked in the firſt claſs of your friends, *your ever-grateful and affectionate*,

ANNA HOWE.

Will you oblige me with a copy of the preamble to the clauſes in your grandfather's will in your favour, and allow me to ſend it to my aunt Harman? She is very deſirous to ſee it: yet your character has ſo charmed her, that, though a ſtranger to you perſonally, ſhe aſſents to the preference given you in that will, before ſhe knows the teſtator's reaſons for giving you that preference.

LETTER II.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

HARLOWE-PLACE, JAN. 13.

HOW you oppreſs me, my deareſt friend, with your politeneſs! I cannot doubt your ſincerity; but you ſhould take care, that you give me not reaſon, from your kind partiality, to call in queſtion your judgment. You do not diſtinguiſh that I take many admirable hints from you, and have the art to paſs them upon you for my own: for in all you do, in all you ſay, nay, in your very looks (ſo animated!) you give leſſons to one who loves you and obſerves you as I love and obſerve you, without

without knowing that you do—So, pray, my dear, be more ſparing of your praiſe for the future, leſt after this confeſſion we ſhould ſuſpect that you ſecretly intend to praiſe yourſelf while you would be thought only to commend another.

Our family has indeed been ſtrangely diſcompoſed.—*Diſcompoſed!*—It has been in *tumults*, ever ſince the unhappy tranſaction; and I have borne all the blame; yet ſhould have had too much concern from myſelf, had I been more juſtly ſpared by every one elſe.

For, whether it be owing to a faulty impatience, having been too indulgently treated to be *inured* to blame, or to the regret I have to hear thoſe cenſured on my account whom it is my duty to vindicate; I have ſometimes wiſhed, that it had pleaſed God to have taken me in my laſt fever, when I had everybody's love and good opinion; but oftener that I had never been diſtinguiſhed by my grandfather as I was: ſince that diſtinction has eſtranged from me my brother's and ſiſter's affections; at leaſt, has raiſed a jealouſy with regard to the apprehended favour of my two uncles, that now-and-then overſhadows their love.

My brother being happily recovered of his fever, and his wound in a hopeful way, although he has not yet ventured abroad, I will be as particular as you deſire in the little hiſtory you demand of me. But Heaven forbid that any-thing ſhould ever happen which may require it to be produced for the purpoſe you mention!

I will begin, as you command, with Mr. Lovelace's addreſs to my ſiſter; and be as brief as poſſible. I will recite facts only; and leave you to judge of the truth of the report raiſed, that the younger ſiſter has robbed the elder.

It was in purſuance of a conference between Lord M. and my uncle Antony, that Mr. Lovelace [my father and mother not forbidding] paid his reſpects to my ſiſter Arabella. My brother was then in Scotland, buſying himſelf in viewing the condition of the conſiderable eſtate which was left him there by his generous godmother, together with one as conſiderable in Yorkſhire. I was alſo abſent at my *Dairy Houſe**, as it is called, buſied in the accounts relating to the eſtate which my grandfather had the goodneſs to deviſe to me; and which once a year was left to my inſpection, although I have given the whole into my father's power.

My ſiſter made me a viſit there the day after Mr. Lovelace had been introduced; and ſeemed highly pleaſed with the gentleman. His birth, his fortune in poſſeſſion, a clear 2000l. a year, as Lord M. had aſſured my uncle; preſumptive-heir to that nobleman's large eſtate: his great expectations from Lady Sarah Sadlier and Lady Betty Lawrance; who with his uncle intereſted themſelves very warmly (he being the laſt of his line) to ſee him married.

So handſome a man!—O her beloved Clary! (for then ſhe was ready to love me dearly, from the overflowings of her good-humour on his account!) He was but *too* handſome a man for *her!*—Were ſhe but as amiable as *ſomebody*, there would be a probability of *holding* his affections!—For he was wild, ſhe heard; *very* wild, very gay; loved intrigue—But he was young; *a man of ſenſe* would ſee his error, could ſhe but have patience with his faults, if his faults were not cured by marriage.

Thus ſhe ran on; and then wanted me to ſee the charming man, as ſhe called him.—Again concerned, that ſhe was not handſome enough for him; with, a ſad thing, that the man ſhould have the advantage of the woman in that particular!—But then, ſtepping to the glaſs, ſhe compliment'd herſelf, that ſhe was very *well*: that there were many women deemed paſſable who were inferior to herſelf; that ſhe was always thought comely; and comelineſs, let her tell me, having not ſo much to loſe as beauty had, would hold, when that would evaporate or fly off. Nay, for that matter, [and again ſhe turned to the glaſs] her features were not irregular; her eyes not at all amiſs. And I remember they were more than uſually brilliant at that time. Nothing, in ſhort,

* Her grandfather, in order to invite her to him as often as her other friends would ſpare her, indulged her in erecting and fitting up a dairy-houſe in her own taſte. When finiſhed, it was ſo much admired for it's elegant ſimplicity and convenience, that the whole ſeat (before, of old time, from it's ſituation, called *The Grove*) was generally known by the name of *The Dairy Houſe*. Her grandfather in particular was fond of having it ſo called.

to be found fault with, though nothing very engaging she doubted—Was there, Clary?

Excuse me, my dear, I never was thus particular before; no, not to you. Nor would I now have written thus freely of a sister, but that she makes a merit to my brother of disowning that she ever liked him; as I shall mention hereafter; and then you will always have me give you minute descriptions, nor suffer me to pass by the air and manner in which things are spoken that are to be taken notice of; rightly observing, that air and manner often express more than the accompanying words.

I congratulated her upon her prospects. She received my compliments with a great deal of self-complacency.

She liked the gentleman still more at his next visit; and yet he made no particular address to her, although an opportunity was given him for it. This was wondered at, as my uncle had introduced him into our family declaredly as a visiter to my sister. But as we are ever ready to make excuses when in good-humour with ourselves, for the perhaps not unwilful slights of those whose approbation we wish to engage; so my sister found out a reason much to Mr. Lovelace's advantage for his not improving the opportunity that was given him.—It was bashfulness, truly, in him. [Bashfulness in Mr. Lovelace, my dear!]—Indeed, gay and lively as he is, he has not the *look* of an impudent man. But I fancy it is many, many years ago since he was bashful.

Thus, however, could my sister make it out—Upon her word, she believed Mr. Lovelace deserved not the bad character he had as to women.—He was really, to *her* thinking, a *modest* man. He would have spoken out, she believed; but once or twice as he seemed to intend to do so, he was under so *agreeable* a confusion! Such a profound respect he seemed to shew her! A perfect *reverence*, she thought: she loved dearly that a man in courtship should shew a reverence to his mistress. So, indeed, we all do, I believe: and with reason; since, if I may judge from what I have seen in many families, there is little enough of it shewn afterwards. And she told my aunt Hervey, that she would be a little less upon the reserve next time he came: she was not one of those *flirts*, not she, who would give pain to a person that deserved to be well-treated; and the more pain for the greatness of his value for her.—I wish she had not somebody whom I love in her eye.

In his third visit, Bella governed herself by this kind and considerate principle: so that, according to her own account of the matter, the man *might* have spoken out.—But he was still *bashful*: he was not able to overcome this *unseasonable reverence*. So this visit went off as the former.

But now she began to be dissatisfied with him. She compared his general character with this his particular behaviour to her; and having never been courted before, owned herself puzzled how to deal with so odd a lover. What did the man mean, she wondered? Had not her uncle brought him *declaredly* as a suitor to her.—It could not be bashfulness, (now she thought of it) since he might have opened his mind to her *uncle*, if he wanted courage to speak directly to *her*.—Not that she cared much for the man neither: but it was right, surely, that a woman should be put out of doubt *early* as to a man's intentions in such a case as this, from his own mouth.—But, truly, she had begun to think, that he was more solicitous to cultivate her *mamma's* good opinion, than *hers!*—Every-body, she owned, admired her mother's conversation; but he was mistaken if he thought respect to her mother *only* would do with *her*. And then, for his own sake, surely he should put it into her power to be complaisant to him, if he gave her reason to approve of him. This distant behaviour, she must take upon her to say, was the more extraordinary, as he continued his visits, and declared himself extremely desirous to cultivate a friendship with the whole family; and as he could have no doubt about her *fenje*, if she might take upon her to join her own with the general opinion; he having taken great notice of, and admired many of her *good things* as they fell from her lips. Reserves were painful, she must needs say, to open and free spirits, like hers: and yet she must tell my aunt, (to whom all this was directed) that she should never forget what she owed to her sex, and to herself, were Mr. Lovelace as unexceptionable in his morals as in his figure, and were he to urge his suit ever so warmly.

I was not of her council. I was still absent,

ſolent. And it was agreed upon between my aunt Hervey and her, that ſhe was to be quite ſolemn and ſhy in his next viſit, if there were not a peculiarity in his addreſs to her.

But my ſiſter, it ſeems, had not conſidered the matter well. This was not the way, as it proved, to be taken, for matters of *mere omiſſion*, with a man of Mr. Lovelace's penetration. Nor with *any* man; ſince if love has not taken root deep enough to cauſe it to ſhoot out into declaration, if an opportunity be fairly given for it, there is little room to expect, that the blighting winds of anger or reſentment will bring it forward. Then my poor ſiſter is not naturally good-humoured. This is too well-known a truth for me to endeavour to conceal it, eſpecially from you. You muſt therefore, I doubt, have appeared to great diſadvantages when ſhe aimed to be worſe-tempered than ordinary.

How they managed it in their next converſation I know not. One would be tempted to think by the iſſue, that Mr. Lovelace was ungenerous enough to ſeek the occaſion given*, and to improve it. Yet he thought fit to put the queſtion too:—but, ſhe ſays, it was not till, by ſome means or other (ſhe knew not how) he had wrought her up to ſuch a pitch of diſpleaſure with him, that it was impoſſible for her to recover herſelf at the inſtant. Nevertheleſs, he re-urged his queſtion, as expecting a definitive anſwer, without waiting for the return of her temper, or endeavouring to mollify her; ſo that ſhe was under a neceſſity of perſiſting in her denial: yet gave him reaſon to think ſhe did not diſlike his addreſs, only the *manner* of it; his court being rather made to her mother than to herſelf, as if he was ſure of *her* conſent at any time.

A good encouraging denial, I muſt own:—as was the reſt of her plea; to wit, a diſinclination to change her ſtate.—Exceedingly happy as ſhe was: ſhe never could be happier! and ſuch-like *conſenting negatives*, as I may call them, and yet not intend a reflection upon my ſiſter: for what can any young creature in the like circumſtances ſay, when ſhe is not ſure but a too ready conſent may ſubject her to the ſlights of a ſex that generally values a bleſſing either more or leſs as it is obtained with difficulty or eaſe? Miſs Biddulph's anſwer to a copy of verſes from a gentleman, reproaching our ſex as acting in diſguiſe, is not a bad one, although *you* perhaps may think it too acknowledging for the female character.

'Ungenerous ſex! to ſcorn us, if we're *kind*;
'And yet upbraid us, if we ſeem *ſevere!*
'Do *you*, t'encourage us to tell our mind,
'Yourſelves put off diſguiſe, and be ſincere.
'*You* talk of coquetry! Your own falſe hearts
'*Compel* our ſex to act diſſembling parts."

Here I am obliged to lay down my pen. I will ſoon reſume it.

LETTER III.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

JAN. 13, 14.

AND thus, as Mr. Lovelace thought fit to *take it*, had he his anſwer from my ſiſter. It was with very great regret, as he pretended, [I doubt the man is an hypocrite, my dear] that he acquieſced in it. So much determinedneſs; ſuch a noble firmneſs in my ſiſter; that there was no hope of prevailing upon her to alter ſentiments ſhe had adopted on full conſideration. He ſighed, as Bella told us, when he took his leave of her: profoundly ſighed; graſped her hand, and kiſſed it with *ſuch* an ardor—withdrew with *ſuch* an air of ſolemn reſpect—ſhe had him then before her.—She could almoſt find in her heart, although he had vexed her, to pity him. A good intentional preparative to love, this pity; ſince, at the time, ſhe little thought that he would not renew his offer.

He waited on my mother after he had taken leave of Bella, and reported his ill ſucceſs in ſo reſpectful a manner, as well with regard to my ſiſter, as to the whole family, and with ſo much concern that he was not accepted as a relation to it, that it left upon them all (my brother being then, as I have ſaid, in Scotland) impreſſions in his favour,

* See Mr. Lovelace's letter, Nº xxxi. in which he briefly accounts for his conduct in this affair.

and

and a belief that this matter would certainly be brought on again. But Mr. Lovelace going up directly to town, where he ſtaid a whole fortnight, and meeting there with my uncle Antony, to whom he regretted his niece's cruel reſolution not to change her ſtate; it was ſeen that there was a total end of the affair.

My ſiſter was not wanting to herſelf on this occaſion. She made a virtue of neceſſity; and the man was quite another man with her.—A vain creature! too well knowing his advantages: yet thoſe not what ſhe had conceived them to be!—Cool and warm by fits and ſtarts; an ague-like lover. A ſteady man, a man of virtue, a man of morals, was worth a thouſand of ſuch gay flutterers. Her ſiſter Clary might think it worth her while perhaps to try to engage ſuch a man. She had patience: ſhe was miſtreſs of perſuaſion; and, indeed, to do the girl juſtice, had *ſomething* of a perſon; but as for *her*, ſhe would not have a man of whoſe heart ſhe could not be ſure for one moment; no, not for the world: and moſt ſincerely glad was ſhe that ſhe had rejected him.

But when Mr. Lovelace returned into the country, he thought fit to viſit my father and mother; hoping, as he told them, that, however unhappy he had been in the rejection of the wiſhed-for alliance, he might be allowed to keep up an acquaintance and friendſhip with a family which he ſhould always reſpect. And then, unhappily as I may ſay, was I at home and preſent.

It was immediately obſerved, that his attention was fixed on me. My ſiſter, as ſoon as he was gone, in a ſpirit of bravery, ſeemed deſirous to promote his addreſs, ſhould it be tendered.

My aunt Hervey was there, and was pleaſed to ſay, we ſhould make the fineſt couple in England—if my ſiſter had no objection. 'No, indeed!' with a haughty toſs, was my ſiſter's reply—it would be ſtrange if ſhe had, after the denial ſhe had given him upon full deliberation.

My mother declared, That *her* only diſlike of his alliance with either daughter, was on account of his reputed faulty morals.

My uncle Harlowe, That his *daughter* Clary, as he delighted to call me from childhood, would reform him if any woman in the world could.

My uncle Antony gave his approbation in high terms; but referred, as my aunt had done, to my ſiſter.

She repeated her contempt of him; and declared, that were there not another man in England, ſhe would not have him. She was ready, on the contrary, ſhe could aſſure them, to reſign her pretenſions under hand and ſeal, if Miſs Clary were taken with his tinſel; and if every one elſe approved of his addreſſes to the girl.

My father, indeed, after a long ſilence, being urged by my uncle Antony to ſpeak his mind, ſaid, that he had a letter from his ſon, on his hearing of Mr. Lovelace's viſits to his daughter Arabella, which he had not ſhewn to any-body but my mother, that treaty being at an end when he received it; that in this letter he expreſſed great diſlike to an alliance with Mr. Lovelace on the ſcore of his immoralities; that he knew, indeed, there was an old grudge between them; but that, being deſirous to prevent all occaſions of diſunion and animoſity in his family, he would ſuſpend the declaration of his own mind till his ſon arrived, and till he had heard his farther objections: that he was the more inclined to make his ſon this compliment, as Mr. Lovelace's general character gave but too much ground for his ſon's diſlike of him; adding, that he had heard (ſo he ſuppoſed had every one) that he was a very extravagant man; that he had contracted debts in his travels: and, indeed, he was pleaſed to ſay, he had the air of a ſpendthrift.

Theſe particulars I had partly from my aunt Hervey, and partly from my ſiſter; for I was called out as ſoon as the ſubject was entered upon. When I returned, my uncle Antony aſked me how *I* ſhould like Mr. Lovelace: every body ſaw, he was pleaſed to ſay, that I had made a conqueſt.

I immediately anſwered, that I did not like him at all: he ſeemed to have too good an opinion both of his perſon and parts, to have any great regard to his wife, let him marry whom he would.

My ſiſter particularly was pleaſed with this anſwer, and confirmed it to be juſt; with a compliment to my judgment—for it was *hers*.

But

But the very next day Lord M. came to Harlowe Place; [I was then absent] and, in his nephew's name, made a propoſal in form; declaring, that it was the ambition of all his family to be related to ours: and he hoped his kinſman would not have ſuch an anſwer on the part of the younger ſiſter, as he had on that of the elder.

In ſhort, Mr. Lovelace's viſits were admitted as thoſe of a man who had not deſerved diſreſpect from our family; but as to his addreſs to me, with a reſervation, as above, on my father's part, that he would determine nothing without his ſon. My diſcretion, as to the reſt, was confided in; for ſtill I had the ſame objections as to the man: nor would I, when we were better acquainted, hear any thing but general talk from him; giving him no opportunity of converſing with me in private.

He bore this with a reſignation little expected from his natural temper, which is generally reported to be quick and haſty, unuſed, it ſeems, from childhood, to check or controul. A caſe too common in conſiderable families where there is an only ſon: and *his* mother never had any other child. But, as I have heretofore told you, I could perceive, notwithſtanding this reſignation, that he had ſo good an opinion of himſelf as not to doubt that his perſon and accompliſhments would inſenſibly engage me; and, could that be once done, he told my aunt Hervey he ſhould hope, from ſo ſteady a temper, that his hold in my affections would be durable; while my ſiſter accounted for his patience in another manner, which would perhaps have had more force if it had come from a perſon leſs prejudiced: that the man was not fond of marrying at all; that he might perhaps have half a ſcore miſtreſſes; and that delay might be as convenient for his *roving*, as for my *well-acted* indifference. That was her kind expreſſion.

Whatever was his motive for a patience ſo generally believed to be out of his uſual character, and where the object of his addreſs was ſuppoſed to be of fortune conſiderable enough to engage his warmeſt attention, he certainly eſcaped many mortifications by it; for while my father ſuſpended his approbation till my brother's arrival, Mr. Lovelace received from every one thoſe civilities which were due to his birth: and although we heard from time to time reports to his diſadvantage with regard to morals, yet could we not queſtion him upon them without giving him greater advantages in his own opinion than the ſituation he was in with us would juſtify to prudence; ſince it was much more likely that his addreſs would *not* be allowed of, than that it *would*.

And thus was he admitted to converſe with our family almoſt upon his own terms; for, while my friends ſaw nothing in his behaviour but what was extremely reſpectful, and obſerved in him no violent importunity, they ſeemed to have taken a great liking to his converſation: while I conſidered him only as a common gueſt when he came, and thought myſelf no more concerned in his viſits, nor at his entrance and departure, than any other of the family.

But this indifference on my ſide was the means of procuring him one very great advantage; ſince upon it was grounded that correſpondence by letters which ſucceeded; and which, had it been to be begun when the family animoſity broke out, would never have been entered into on my part. The occaſion was this.

My uncle Hervey has a young gentleman entruſted to his care, whom he has thoughts of ſending abroad a year or two hence, to make the grand tour, as it is called; and, finding Mr. Lovelace could give a good account of every thing neceſſary for a young traveller to obſerve upon ſuch an occaſion, he deſired him to write down a deſcription of the courts and countries he had viſited, and what was moſt worthy of curioſity in them.

He conſented, on condition that I would *direct* his ſubjects, as he called it: and, as every one had heard his manner of writing commended, and thought his narratives might be agreeable amuſements in winter evenings, and that he could have no opportunity particularly to addreſs me in them, ſince they were to be read in full aſſembly before they were given to the young gentleman, I made the leſs ſcruple to write, and to make obſervations, and put queſtions for our farther information—ſtill the leſs perhaps as I love writing; and thoſe who do, are fond, you know, of occaſions to uſe the pen. And then, having every one's conſent, and my uncle Hervey's

Hervey's desire that I would write, I thought that if I had been the only scrupulous person, it would have shewn a particularity that a vain man might construe to his advantage, and which my sister would not fail to animadvert upon.

You have seen some of these letters, and have been pleased with his account of persons, places, and things; and we have both agreed, that he was no common observer upon what he had seen.

My sister herself allowed that the man had a tolerable knack of writing and describing: and my father, who had been abroad in his youth, said, that his remarks were curious, and shewed him to be a person of reading, judgment, and taste.

Thus was a kind of correspondence begun between him and me, with general approbation; while every one wondered at, and was pleased with, his patient veneration of me, for so they called it. However, it was not doubted but he would soon be more importunate, since his visits were more frequent, and he acknowledged to my aunt Hervey a passion for me, accompanied with an awe that he had never known before; to which he attributed what he called his but *seeming* acquiescence with my father's pleasure, and the distance I kept him at. And yet, my dear, this may be his usual manner of behaviour to our sex; for had not my sister at first all his *reverence?*

Mean time, my father, expecting his importunity, kept in readiness the reports he had heard in his disfavour, to charge them upon him then, as so many objections to his address. And it was highly agreeable to me that he did so: it would have been strange if it were not; since the person who could reject Mr. Wyerley's address for the sake of his *free opinions*, must have been inexcusable, had she not rejected another's for his *freer practices*.

But I should own, that in the letters he sent me upon the general subject, he more than once inclosed a particular one, declaring his passionate regards for me, and complaining, with fervour enough, of my reserves: but of these I took not the least notice; for, as I had not written to him at all, but upon a subject so general, I thought it was but right to let what he wrote upon one so particular pass off as if I had never seen it; and the rather, as I was not then at liberty (from the approbation his letters met with) to break off the correspondence, unless I had assigned the true reason for doing so. Besides, with all his respectful assiduities, it was easy to observe (if it had not been his general character) that his temper is naturally haughty and violent; and I had seen too much of that untractable spirit in my brother to like it in one who hoped to be still more nearly related to me.

I had a little specimen of this temper of his upon the very occasion I have mentioned: for, after he had sent me a third particular letter with the general one, he asked me, the next time he came to Harlowe Place, if I had not received such a one from him. I told him I should never answer one so sent; and that I had waited for such an occasion as he had now given me to tell him so: I desired him therefore not to write again on the subject; assuring him, that if he did, I would return both, and never write another line to him.

You cannot imagine how saucily the man looked; as if, in short, he was disappointed that he had not made a more sensible impression upon me: nor, when he recollected himself, (as he did immediately) what a visible struggle it cost him to change his haughty airs for more placid ones. But I took no notice of either; for I thought it best to convince him, by the coolness and indifference with which I repulsed his forward hopes, (at the same time intending to avoid the affectation of pride or vanity) that he was not considerable enough in my eyes to make me take over-ready offence at what he said, or at his haughty looks: in other words, that I had not value enough for him to treat him with peculiarity either by smiles or frowns. Indeed, he had cunning enough to give me, undesignedly, a piece of instruction which taught me this caution; for he had said in conversation once, that if a man could not make a woman in courtship own herself *pleased* with him, it was as *much* and oftentimes *more* to his purpose to make her *angry* with him.

I must break off here. But will continue the subject the very first opportunity. Mean time, I am *your most affectionate friend and servant*,

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

JAN. 15.

SUCH, my dear, was the situation Mr. Lovelace and I were in when my brother arrived from Scotland.

The moment Mr. Lovelace's visits were mentioned to him, he, without either hesitation or apology, expressed his disapprobation of them. He found great flaws in his character, and took the liberty to say, in so many words, that he wondered how it came into the heads of his uncles to encourage such a man for *either* of his sisters: at the same time returning his thanks to my father for declining his consent till *he* arrived, in such a manner, I thought, as a superior would do, when he commended an inferior for having well performed his duty in his absence.

He justified his avowed inveteracy by common fame, and by what he had known of him at college; declaring, that he had ever hated him; ever should hate him; and would never own *him* for a brother, or *me* for a sister, if I married him.

That early antipathy I have heard accounted for in this manner.

Mr. Lovelace was always noted for his vivacity and courage; and no less, it seems, for the swift and surprizing progress he made in all parts of literature: for diligence in his studies, in the hours of study, he had hardly his equal. This, it seems, was his general character at the university; and it gained him many friends among the more learned; while those who did not love him, feared him, by reason of the offence his vivacity made him too ready to give, and of the courage he shewed in supporting the offence when given; which procured him as many followers as he pleased among the mischievous sort.—No very amiable character, you will say, upon the whole.

But my brother's temper was not more happy. His native haughtiness could not bear a superiority so visible; and whom we fear more than love, we are not far from hating; and having less command of his passions than the other, he was evermore the subject of his perhaps *indecent* ridicule; so that they never met without quarrelling. And every-body, either from love or fear, siding with his antagonist, he had a most uneasy time of it while both continued in the same college. It was the less wonder, therefore, that a young man who is not noted for the gentleness of his temper, should resume an antipathy early begun, and so deeply rooted.

He found my sister, who waited but for the occasion, ready to join him in his resentments against the man he hated. She utterly disclaimed all manner of regard for him: never liked him at all; his estate was certainly much incumbered; it was impossible it should be otherwise, so entirely devoted as he was to his pleasures. He kept no house; had no equipage: nobody pretended that he wanted pride; the reason therefore was easy to be guessed at. And then did she boast of, and my brother praise her for, refusing him: and both joined, on all occasions, to depreciate him, and not seldom *made* the occasions; their displeasure against him causing every subject to run into this, if it began not with it.

I was not solicitous to vindicate him when I was not joined in their reflections. I told them, I did not value him enough to make a difference in the family on his account: and as he was supposed to have given too much cause for their ill opinion of him, I thought he ought to take the consequence of his own faults.

Now-and-then, indeed, when I observed that their vehemence carried them beyond all bounds of probability in their charges against him, I thought it but justice to put in a word for him. But this only subjected me to reproach, as having a prepossession in his favour which I would not own.—So that, when I could not change the subject, I used to retire either to my musick, or to my closet.

Their behaviour to him when they could not help seeing him, was very cold and disobliging; but as yet not directly affrontive. For they were in hopes of prevailing upon my father to forbid his visits. But, as there was nothing in his behaviour that might warrant such a treatment of a man of his birth and fortune, they succeeded not: and then they were very earnest with *me* to forbid them. I asked, what authority

I had to take such a step in my father's house; and when my behaviour to him was so distant that he seemed to be as much the guest of any other person of the family, themselves excepted, as mine? In revenge, they told me, that it was cunning management between us; and that we both understood one another better than we pretended to do. And at last they gave such a loose to their passions, all of a sudden*, as I may say, that instead of withdrawing, as they used to do when he came, they threw themselves in his way purposely to affront him.

Mr. Lovelace, you may believe, very ill-brooked this: but nevertheless contented himself to complain of it to me; in high terms, however, telling me that, but for my sake, my brother's treatment of him was not to be borne.

I was sorry for the merit this gave him in his own opinion with me; and the more, as some of the affronts he received were too flagrant to be excused: but I told him that I was determined not to fall out with my brother, if I could help it, whatever faults he had; and, since they could not see one another with temper, should be glad that he would not throw himself in my brother's way; and I was sure my brother would not seek *him*.

He was very much nettled at this answer: but said, he must bear his affronts if I would have it so. He had been accused himself of violence in his temper; but he hoped to shew on *this* occasion that he had a command of his passions which few young men, so highly provoked, would be *able* to shew; and doubted not but it would be attributed to a *proper motive* by a person of my generosity and penetration.

My brother had just before, with the approbation of my uncles, employed a person, related to a discharged bailiff or steward of Lord M. who had had the management of some part of Mr. Lovelace's affairs, (from which he was also dismissed by him) to enquire into his debts, after his companions, into his amours, and the like.

My aunt Hervey, in confidence, gave me the following particulars of what the man said of him.

That he was a generous landlord; that he spared nothing for solid and lasting improvements upon his estate; and that he looked into his own affairs, and understood them: that he had been very expensive when abroad, and contracted a large debt; (for he made no secret of his affairs) yet chose to limit himself to an annual sum, and to decline equipage, in order to avoid being obliged to his uncle and aunts, from whom he might have what money he pleased; but that he was very jealous of their controul; had often quarrels with them; and treated them so freely, that they were all afraid of him. However, that his estate was never mortgaged, as my brother had heard it was; his credit was always high; and the man believed he was, by this time, near upon, if not quite, clear of the world.

He was a sad gentleman, he said, as to women:—if his tenants had pretty daughters, they chose to keep them out of his sight. He believed he kept no particular mistress; for he had heard *newelty*, (that was the man's word) was every-thing with him. But for his uncle's and aunt's teazings, the man fancied he would not think of marriage. He was never known to be disguised with liquor; but was a great plotter, and a greater writer: that he lived a wild life in town, by what he had heard; had six or seven companions as bad as himself, whom, now-and-then, he brought down with him; and the country was always glad when they went up again. He would have it that, although passionate, he was good-humoured; loved as well to take a jest as to give one; and would rally himself, upon occasion, the freest of any man he ever knew.

This was his character from an enemy; for, as my aunt observed, every thing the man said commendably of him came grudgingly, with a *Must needs say—To do him justice*, &c. while the contrary was delivered with a free good-will. And this character, as a worse was expected, though this was bad enough, not answering the end of enquiring after it, my brother and sister were more apprehensive than before, that his address would be encouraged, since the worst part of it was known, or supposed, when he was first introduced to my sister.

But, with regard to myself, I must

* The reason of this their more-openly shewn animosity is given in Letter xiii.

observe

Plate XXIX.

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observe in his disfavour, that, notwithstanding the merit he wanted to make with me for his patience upon my brother's ill treatment of him, I owed him no compliments for trying to conciliate with *him*. Not that I believe it would have signified any thing if he had made ever such court either to him or to my sister; yet one might have expected from a man of his politeness, and from his pretensions, you know, that he would have been willing to *try*: instead of which, he shewed such a contempt both of my brother and sister, especially my brother, as was construed into a defiance of them; and for me to have hinted at an alteration in his behaviour to my brother, was an advantage I knew he would have been proud of; and which, therefore, I had no mind to give him. But I doubted not that, having so very little encouragement from *any*-body, his pride would soon take fire, and he would of himself discontinue his visits, or go to town; where, till he came acquainted with our family, he used chiefly to reside: and in this latter case he had no reason to expect that I would *receive*, much less *answer*, his letters; the occasion which had led me to receive *any* of his being by this time over.

But my brother's antipathy would not permit him to *wait* for such an event; and after several excesses, which Mr. Lovelace still returned with contempt, and a haughtiness too much like that of the aggressor, my brother took upon himself to fill up the door-way once when he came, as if to oppose his entrance: and, upon his asking for me, demanded what his business was with his sister.

The other, with a challenging air, as my brother says, told him he would answer a gentleman *any* question; but he wished that Mr. James Harlowe, who had of late given himself high airs, would remember that he was not *now* at college.

Just then the good Doctor Lewen, who frequently honours me with a *visit of conversation*, as he is pleased to call it, and had parted with me in my own parlour, came to the door; and, hearing the words, interposed, both having their hands upon their swords: and telling Mr. Lovelace where I was, he burst by my brother to come to me; leaving him chafing, he said, like a hunted boar at bay.

This alarmed us all. My father was pleased to hint to Mr. Lovelace, that he wished he would discontinue his visits, for the peace-sake of the family: and I, by his command, spoke a great deal plainer.

But Mr. Lovelace is a man not easily brought to give up his purpose, especially in a point wherein he pretends his heart is so much engaged: and no absolute prohibition having been given, things went on for a little while as before; for I saw plainly that to have denied myself to his visits, (which, however, I declined receiving as often as I could) was to bring forward some desperate issue between the two; since the offence so readily given on one side was brooked by the other only out of consideration to me.

And thus did my brother's rashness lay me under an obligation where I would least have owed it.

The intermediate proposals of Mr. Symmes and Mr. Mullins, both (in turn) encouraged by my brother, induced him to be more patient for a while, as nobody thought me over-forward in Mr. Lovelace's favour; for he hoped that he should engage my father and uncles to approve of the one or the other in opposition to the man he hated. But when he found that I had interest enough to disengage myself from the addresses of those gentlemen, as I had (before he went to Scotland, and before Mr. Lovelace visited here) of Mr. Wyerley's, he then kept no measures: and first set himself to upbraid me for a supposed prepossession, which he treated as if it were criminal; and then to insult Mr. Lovelace in person, at Mr. Edward Symmes's, the brother of the other Symmes, two miles off; and no good Doctor Lewen being there to interpose, the unhappy rencounter followed. My brother was disarmed, as you have heard; and on being brought home, and giving us ground to suppose he was much worse hurt than he really was, and a fever ensuing, every one flamed out; and all was laid at my door.

Mr. Lovelace for three days together sent twice each day to enquire after my brother's health; and although he received rude and even shocking returns, he thought fit on the fourth day to make in person the same enquiries; and received still greater incivilities from my

two uncles, who happened to be both there. My father alſo was held by force from going to him with his ſword in his hand, although he had the gout upon him.

I fainted away with terror, ſeeing every one ſo violent, and hearing Mr. Lovelace ſwear that he would not depart till he had made my uncles aſk his pardon for the indignities he had received at their hands; a door being held faſt-locked between him and them. My mother all the time was praying and ſtruggling to withold my father in the great parlour. Meanwhile, my ſiſter, who had treated Mr. Lovelace with virulence, came in to me, and inſulted me as faſt as I recovered. But when Mr. Lovelace was told how ill I was, he departed; nevertheleſs vowing revenge.

He was ever a favourite with our domeſticks. His bounty to them, and having always ſomething facetious to ſay to each, had made them all of his party: and on this occaſion they privately blamed every-body elſe, and reported his calm and gentlemanly behaviour (till the provocations given him ran very high) in ſuch favourable terms, that thoſe reports, and my apprehenſions of the conſequence of this treatment, induced me to *read a letter* he ſent me that night; and, it being written in the moſt reſpectful terms, (offering to ſubmit the whole to my deciſion, and to govern himſelf entirely by my will) *to anſwer* it ſome days after.

To this unhappy neceſſity was owing our renewed correſpondence, as I may call it: yet I did not write till I had informed myſelf from Mr. Symmes's brother, that he was really inſulted into the act of drawing his ſword by my brother's repeatedly threatening (upon his excuſing himſelf out of regard to me) to brand him if he did not; and, by all the enquiry I could make, that he was again the ſufferer from my uncles in a more violent manner than I have related.

The ſame circumſtances were related to my father and other relations by Mr. Symmes; but they had gone too far in making themſelves parties to the quarrel either to retract or forgive; and I was forbidden to correſpond with him, or to be ſeen a moment in his company.

One thing, however, I can ſay, but that in confidence, becauſe my mother commanded me not to mention it: that, expreſſing her apprehenſion of the conſequences of the indignities offered to Mr. Lovelace, ſhe told me ſhe would leave it to my prudence to do all I could to prevent the impending miſchief on *one* ſide.

I am obliged to break off. But I believe I have written enough to anſwer very fully all that you have required of me. It is not for a child to ſeek to clear her own character, or to juſtify her actions, at the expence of the moſt revered ones: yet, as I know that the account of all thoſe farther proceedings by which I may be affected, will be intereſting to ſo dear a friend, (who will communicate to others no more than what is fitting) I will continue to write, as I have opportunity, as minutely as we are uſed to write to each other. Indeed, I have no delight, as I have often told you, equal to that which I take in converſing with you—by *letter*, when I cannot in *perſon*.

Mean time, I cannot help ſaying, that I am exceedingly concerned to find that I am become ſo much the publick talk as you tell me I am. Your kind, your *precautionary*, regard for my fame, and the opportunity you have given me to tell my own ſtory previous to any new accident, (which Heaven avert!) is ſo like the warm friend I have ever found in my dear Miſs Howe, that, with redoubled obligation, you bind me to be *your ever-grateful and affectionate*,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

COPY OF THE REQUESTED PREAMBLE TO THE CLAUSES IN HER GRANDFATHER'S WILL: INCLOSED IN THE PRECEDING LETTER.

'AS the particular eſtate I have mentioned and deſcribed above is principally of my own raiſing—As my three ſons have been uncommonly proſperous, and are very rich; the eldeſt by means of the unexpected benefits he reaps from his new-found mines; the ſecond, by what has, as unexpectedly, fallen in to him on the deaths of ſeveral relations of his preſent wife, the worthy daughter by both ſides of very honourable families, over and above the very large portion which he received with her in marriage; my ſon Antony by his Eaſt-India

India traffick and successful voyages—As furthermore my grandson James will be sufficiently provided for by his grandmother Lovell's kindness to him; who, having no near relations, hath assured me that she hath, as well by deed of gift as by will, left him both her Scottish and English estates; for never was there a family more prosperous in all it's branches, blessed be God therefore—And as my said son James will very probably make it up to my grand-daughter Arabella, to whom I intend no disrespect, nor have reason; for she is a very hopeful and dutiful child—And as my sons, John and Antony, seem not inclined to a married life, so that my son James is the only one who has children, or is likely to have any—For all these reasons, and because my dearest and beloved grand-daughter Clarissa hath been from her infancy a matchless young creature in her duty to me, and admired by all who knew her as a very extraordinary child; I must therefore take the pleasure of considering her as my own peculiar child; and this without intending offence; and I hope it will not be taken as any, since my son James can bestow his favours accordingly, and in greater proportion, upon his son James, and upon his daughter Arabella. These, I say, are the reasons which move me to dispose of the above-described estate in the precious child's favour, who is the delight of my old age: and, I verily think, has contributed, by her amiable duty and kind and tender regards, to prolong my life.

'Wherefore it is my express will and commandment, and I enjoin my said three sons John, James, and Antony, and my grandson James, and my grand-daughter Arabella, as they value my blessing, and will regard my memory, and would wish their own last wills and desires to be fulfilled by *their* survivors, that they will not impugn or contest the following bequests and devises in favour of my said grand-daughter Clarissa, although they should not be strictly conformable to law, or to the forms thereof; nor suffer them to be controverted or disputed on any pretence whatsoever.

'And in this confidence, &c. &c. &c.'

LETTER V.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

JAN. 20.

I Have been hindered from prosecuting my intention. Neither nights nor mornings have been my own. My mother has been very ill, and would have no other nurse but me. I have not stirred from her bed-side, (for she kept her bed;) and two nights I had the honour of sharing it with her.

Her disorder was a very violent colick. The contentions of these fierce, these masculine spirits, and the apprehension of mischiefs that may arise from the encreasing animosity which all *here* have against Mr. Lovelace, and *his* too-well known resenting and intrepid character, she cannot bear. Then the foundations laid, as she dreads, for jealousy and heart burnings in her own family, late so happy and so united, afflict exceedingly a gentle and sensible mind, which has from the beginning, on all occasions, sacrificed it's own inward satisfaction to outward peace. My brother and sister, who used very often to jar, are now so entirely one, and are so much together, (*caballing* was the word that dropped from my mother's lips, as if at unawares) that she is very fearful of the consequences that may follow. To my prejudice, perhaps, is her kind concern; since she sees that they behave to me every hour with more and more shyness and reserve: yet, would she but exert that authority which the superiority of her fine talents gives her, all these family-feuds might, perhaps, be extinguished in their but-yet beginnings; especially as she may be assured that all fitting concessions shall be made by me, not only as my brother and sister are my elders, but for the sake of so excellent and so indulgent a mother.

For, if I may say to you, my dear, what I would not to any other person living, it is my opinion that, had she been of a temper that would have borne less, she would have had ten times less to bear than she has had. No commendation, you will say, of the generosity of those spirits which can turn to it's own disquiet so much condescending goodness.

'Upon my word I am sometimes tempted

tempted to think that we may make the world allow for and respect us as we please, if we can but be sturdy in our wills, and set out accordingly. It is but being the *less* beloved for it, that is all: and if we have power to oblige those we have to do with, it will not appear to *us* that we are. Our flatterers will tell us any thing sooner than our faults, or what they know we do not like to hear.

Were there not truth in this observation, is it possible that my brother and sister could make their very failings, their vehemences, of such importance to all the family? 'How will my *son*, 'how will my *nephew*, take this or that 'measure? What will *he* say to it? Let 'us consult *him* about it;' are references always previous to every resolution taken by his superiors, whose will ought to be his. Well may he expect to be treated with this deference by every other person, when my father himself, generally so absolute, constantly pays it to him; and the more since his godmother's bounty has given independence to a spirit that was before under too little restraint. But whither may these reflections lead me! I know you do not love any of us but my mother and me; and, being above all disguises, make me sensible that you do *not* oftener than I wish. Ought I then to add force to your dislikes of those whom I wish you to like?—of my father especially; for he, alas! has some excuse for his impatience of contradiction. He is not *naturally* an ill-tempered man; and in his person and air, and in his conversation too, when not under the torture of a gouty paroxysm, every-body distinguishes the gentleman born and educated.

Our sex perhaps must expect to bear a little—*uncourtliness* shall I call it?—from the *husband* whom as the *lover* they let know the preference their hearts gave him to all other men.—Say what they will of generosity being a *manly* virtue; but upon my word, my dear, I have ever yet observed, that it is not to be met with in that sex one time in ten that it is to be found in ours. But my father was soured by the cruel distemper I have named; which seized him all at once in the very prime of life, in so violent a manner as to take from the most active of minds, as *his* was, all power of activity, and that in all appearance for life.—It imprisoned, as I may say, his lively spirits in himself, and turned the edge of them against his own peace; his extraordinary prosperity adding to his impatiency. Those, I believe, who want the fewest earthly blessings, most regret that they want any.

But my brother! what excuse can be made for his haughty and morose temper? He is really, my dear, I am sorry to have occasion to say it, an ill-tempered young man; and treats my mother sometimes—Indeed he is not dutiful.—But, possessing every thing, he has the vice of age mingled with the ambition of youth, and enjoys nothing—but his own haughtiness and ill-temper, I was going to say.—Yet again am I adding force to your dislikes of some of us.—Once, my dear, it was perhaps in your power to have moulded him as you pleased.—Could you have been my sister!—Then had I had a *friend* in a sister.—But no wonder that he does not love you now; who could nip in the bud, and that with a disdain, let me say, too much of kin to his haughtiness, a passion that would not have wanted a fervor worthy of the object; and which possibly would have *made* him worthy.

But no more of this. I will prosecute my former intention in my next; which I will sit down to as soon as breakfast is over; dispatching this by the messenger whom you have so kindly sent to enquire after us on my silence. Mean time, I am, *your most affectionate and obliged friend and servant*,

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER VI.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

HARLOWE PLACE, JAN. 20.

I Will now resume my narrative of proceedings here. My brother being in a good way, although you may be sure that his resentments are rather heightened than abated by the galling disgrace he has received, my friends (my father and uncles, however, if not my brother and sister) begin to think that I have been treated unkindly. My mother has been so good as to tell me this since I sent away my last.

Nevertheless

Nevertheleſs I believe they all think that I receive letters from Mr. Lovelace. But Lord M. being inclined rather to ſupport than to blame his nephew, they ſeem to be ſo much afraid of Mr. Lovelace, that they do not put it to me whether I do or not; conniving on the contrary, as it ſhould ſeem, at the only method left to allay the vehemence of a ſpirit which they have ſo much provoked: for he ſtill inſiſts upon ſatisfaction from my uncles; and this poſſibly (for he wants not art) as the beſt way to be introduced again with ſome advantage into our family. And, indeed, my aunt Hervey has put it to my mother, whether it were not beſt to prevail upon my brother to take a turn to his Yorkſhire eſtate, (which he was intending to do before) and to ſtay there till all is blown over.

But this is very far from being his intention: for he has already began to hint again, that he ſhall never be eaſy or ſatisfied till I am married; and, finding neither Mr. Symmes nor Mr. Mullins will be accepted, has propoſed Mr. Wyerley once more, on the ſcore of his great paſſion for me. This I have again rejected; and but yeſterday he mentioned one who has applied to him by letter, making high offers. This is Mr. Solmes; *Rich* Solmes you know they call him. But this application has not met with the attention of one ſingle ſoul.

If none of his ſchemes of getting me married take effect, he has thoughts, I am told, of propoſing to me to go to Scotland, that, as the compliment is, I may put his houſe there in ſuch order as our own is in. But this my mother intends to oppoſe for her own ſake; becauſe, having relieved her, as ſhe is pleaſed to ſay, of the houſhold cares, (for which my ſiſter, you know, has no turn) they muſt again devolve upon her if I go. And if *ſhe* did not oppoſe it, *I* ſhould; for, believe me, I have no mind to be his houſekeeper; and I am ſure, were I to go with him, I ſhould be treated rather as a ſervant than a ſiſter—perhaps, not the better becauſe I *am* his ſiſter. And if Mr. Lovelace ſhould follow me, things might be worſe than they are now.

But I have beſought my mother, who is apprehenſive of Mr. Lovelace's viſits, and for fear of whom my uncles never ſtir out without arms and armed ſervants, (my brother alſo being near well enough to go abroad) to procure me permiſſion to be your gueſt for a fortnight or ſo.—Will your mother, think you, my dear, give me leave?

I dare not aſk to go to my *Dairy-houſe*, as my good grandfather would call it; for I am now afraid of being thought to have a wiſh to enjoy that independence to which his will has entitled me: and as matters are ſituated, ſuch a wiſh would be imputed to my regard to the man to whom they have now ſo great an antipathy. And, indeed, could I be as eaſy and happy here as I uſed to be, I would defy that man and all his ſex; and never repent that I have given the power of my fortune into my father's hands.

* *

JUST now, my mother has rejoiced me with the news that my requeſted permiſſion is granted. Every one thinks it beſt that I ſhould go to you, except my brother. But he was told, that he muſt not expect to rule in every thing. I am to be ſent for into the great parlour, where are my two uncles and my aunt Hervey, and to be acquainted with this conceſſion in form.

You know, my dear, that there is a good deal of ſolemnity among us. But never was there a family more united in it's different branches than ours. Our uncles conſider us as their own children, and declare, that it is for our ſakes they live ſingle. So that they are adviſed with upon every article relating to us, or that may affect us. It is therefore the leſs wonder, at a time when they underſtand that Mr. Lovelace is determined to pay us an *amicable* viſit, as he calls it, (but which I am ſure cannot end amicably) that they ſhould both be conſulted upon the permiſſion I had deſired to attend you.

* *

I WILL acquaint you with what paſſed at the general leave given me to be your gueſt. And yet I know that you will not love my brother the better for my communication. But I am angry with him myſelf, and cannot help it. And beſides, it is proper to let you know the terms I go upon, and their motives for permitting me to go.

'Clary,' ſaid my mother, as ſoon as I entered the great parlour, 'your re-

'queſt

'queſt to go to Miſs Howe's for a few 'days has been taken into conſidera- 'tion, and granted—'

'Much againſt my liking, I aſſure 'you,' ſaid my brother, rudely inter- rupting her.

'Son James!' ſaid my father, and knit his brows.

He was not daunted. His arm is in a ſling. He often has the mean art to look upon *that*, when any thing is hinted that may be ſuppoſed to lead to- wards the leaſt favour to or reconcilia- tion with Mr. Lovelace.—'Let the *girl*, 'then,' [I am often the *girl* with him] 'be prohibited ſeeing that vile liber- 'tine.'

Nobody ſpoke.

'Do you hear, ſiſter Clary?' taking their ſilence for approbation of what he had dictated; 'you are not to receive 'viſits from Lord M.'s nephew.'

Every one ſtill remained ſilent.

'Do you ſo underſtand the licence 'you have, Miſs?' interrogated he.

'I would be glad, Sir,' ſaid I, 'to 'underſtand that you are my *brother*— 'and that *you* would underſtand that 'you are *only* my brother.'

'O the fond, fond heart!' with a ſneer of inſult, lifting up his hands.

'Sir,' ſaid I to my father, 'to your 'juſtice I appeal: if I have deſerved 'reflection, let me not be ſpared. But 'if I am to be anſwerable for the raſh- 'neſs—'

'No more!—No more of either ſide,' ſaid my father. 'You are not to re- 'ceive the viſits of that Lovelace, 'though— Nor are you, ſon James, 'to reflect upon your ſiſter. She is a 'worthy child.'

'Sir, I have done,' replied he—'and 'yet I have *her* honour at heart, as 'much as the honour of the reſt of the 'family.'

'And *hence*, Sir,' retorted I, 'your 'unbrotherly reflections upon me?'

'Well, but you obſerve, Miſs,' ſaid he, 'that it is not *I*, but your *father*, 'that tells you, that you are not to re- 'ceive the viſits of that Lovelace.'

'Couſin Harlowe,' ſaid my aunt Hervey, 'allow me to ſay, that my 'couſin Clary's prudence may be con- 'fided in.'

'I am *convinced* it may,' joined my mother.

'But, aunt—but, Madam,' (put in my ſiſter)—'there is no hurt, I preſume, 'in letting my ſiſter know the condition 'ſhe goes to Miſs Howe upon; ſince, 'if he gets a knack of viſiting her 'there—'

'You may be ſure,' interrupted my uncle Harlowe, 'he will endeavour to 'ſee her there.'

'So would ſuch an impudent man 'here,' ſaid my uncle Antony: 'and 'tis better *there* than *here*.'

'Better *no where*,' ſaid my father. —'I command you,' (turning to me) 'on pain of diſpleaſure, that you ſee 'him not at all.'

'I will not, Sir, in any way of en- 'couragement, I do aſſure you: nor 'at all if I can properly avoid it.'

'You know with what indifference,' ſaid my mother, 'ſhe has hitherto ſeen 'him.—Her prudence may be truſted 'to, as my ſiſter Hervey ſays.'

'With what *appa—rent* indiffe- 'rence!' drolled my brother.

'Son James!' ſaid my father ſternly.

'I have done, Sir,' ſaid he. But again, in a provoking manner, he re- minded me of the prohibition.

Thus ended this conference.

Will you engage, my dear, that the hated man ſhall not come near your houſe?—But what an inconſiſtence is this, when they conſent to my going, thinking his viſits *here* no otherwiſe to to be avoided!—But if he does come, I charge you never leave us alone toge- ther.

As I have no reaſon to doubt a wel- come from your good mother, I will put every thing in order here, and be with you in two or three days.

Mean time, I am *your moſt affection- ate and obliged*,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LETTER VII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

[AFTER HER RETURN FROM HER.]

HARLOWE PLACE, FEB. 20.

I Beg your excuſe for not writing ſooner. Alas, my dear, I have ſad proſpects before me! My brother and ſiſter have ſucceeded in all their views. They have found out another lover for me; an hideous one!—Yet he is en- couraged

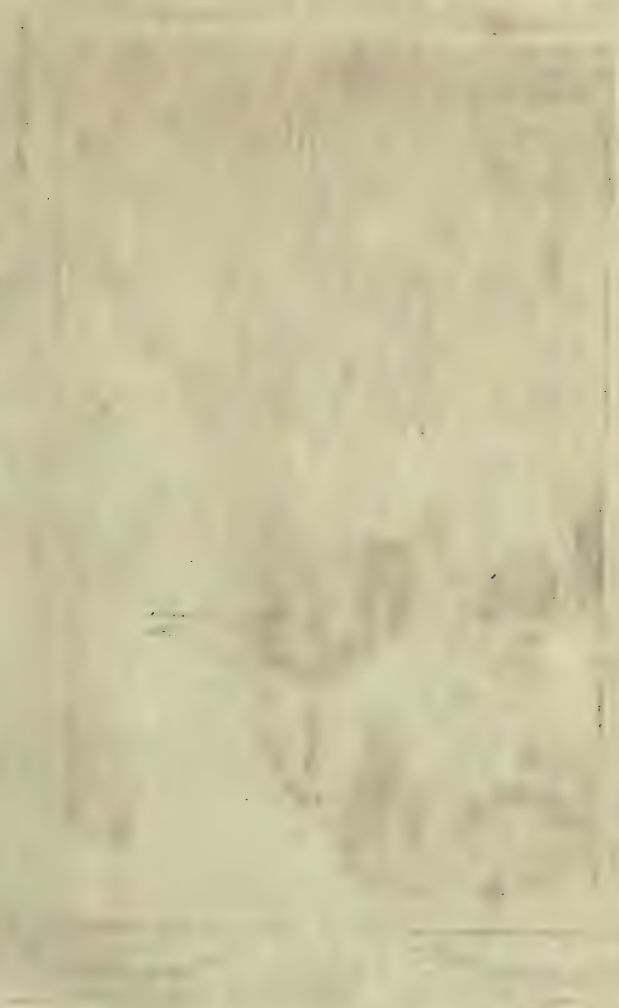

Plate I.

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couraged by every-body. No wonder that I was ordered home so suddenly. At an hour's warning!—No other notice, you know, than what was brought with the chariot that was to carry me back.—It was for fear, as I have been informed, [an unworthy fear!] that I should have entered into any concert with Mr. Lovelace had I known their motive for commanding me home; apprehending, it is evident, that I should dislike the man they had to propose to me.

And well might they apprehend so: for who do you think he is?—No other than that *Solmes!*——Could you have believed it?—And they are all determined too; my mother with the rest!—Dear, dear excellence! how could she be thus brought over, when I am assured, that on his first being proposed she was pleased to say, that had Mr. Solmes the *Indies* in possession, and would endow me with them, she should not think him deserving of her Clarissa!

The reception I met with at my return, so different from what I used to meet with on every little absence, [and now I had been from them three weeks] convinced me that I was to suffer for the happiness I had had in your company and conversation for that most agreeable period. I will give you an account of it.

My brother met me at the door, and gave me his hand when I stepped out of the chariot. He bowed very low; 'Pray, Miss, favour me.'—I thought it in good-humour; but found it afterwards mock-respect: and so he led me in great form, I prattling all the way, enquiring of every-body's health, (although I was so soon to see them, and there was hardly time for answers) into the great parlour; where were my father, mother, my two uncles, and sister.

I was struck all of a heap as soon as I entered, to see a solemnity which I had been so little used to on the like occasions in the countenance of every dear relation. They all kept their seats. I ran to my father, and kneeled; then to my mother; and met from both a cold salute: from my father a blessing but half pronounced; my mother, indeed, called me child, but embraced me not with her usual indulgent ardor.

After I had paid my duty to my uncles, and my compliments to my sister, which she received with solemn and stiff form, I was bid to sit down. But my heart was full: and I said it became me to stand, if I *could* stand, upon a reception so awful and unusual. I was forced to turn my face from them, and pull out my handkerchief.

My unbrotherly accuser hereupon stood forth, and charged me with having received no less than *five or six visits* at Miss Howe's from the man they had all so much reason to hate; [that was the expression] notwithstanding the commands I had had to the contrary. And he bid me deny it if I could.

I had never been used, I said, to deny the truth, nor would I now. I owned I had in the three weeks passed seen the person I presumed he meant *oftener* than five or six times. ['Pray hear me, 'brother,' said I; for he was going to flame out.] 'But he always asked for 'Mrs. or Miss Howe, when he came.'

I proceeded, That I had reason to believe, that both Mrs. Howe and Miss, as matters stood, would much rather have excused his visits; but they had more than once apologized, That having not the same reason my papa had to forbid him their house, his rank and fortune entitled him to civility.

You see, my dear, I made not the pleas I might have made.

My brother seemed ready to give a loose to his passion: my father put on the countenance which always portends a gathering storm; my uncles mutteringly whispered; and my sister aggravatingly held up her hands. While I begged to be heard out;—and my mother said, 'Let the *child*,' that was her kind word, 'be heard.'

I hoped, I said, there was no harm done; that it became not me to prescribe to Mrs. or Miss Howe who should be their visiters; that Mrs. Howe was always diverted with the raillery that passed between Miss and him; that I had no reason to challenge *her* guest for *my* visiter, as I should seem to have done had I refused to go into their company when he was with them; that I had never seen him out of the presence of one or both of those ladies; and had signified to him once, on his urging for a few moments private conversation with me, that unless a reconciliation were effected between my family and his, he must

not expect that I would countenance his visits, much less give him an opportunity of that sort.

I told them further, That Miss Howe so well understood my mind, that she never left me a moment while Mr. Lovelace was there: that when he came, if I was not below in the parlour, I would not suffer myself to be called to him; although I thought it would be an affectation which would give him advantage rather than the contrary, if I had left company when he came in; or refused to enter into it when I found he would stay any time.

My brother heard me out with such a kind of impatience as shewed he was resolved to be dissatisfied with me, say what I would. The rest, as the event has proved, behaved as if they *would* have been satisfied, had they not farther points to carry by intimidating me. All this made it evident, as I mentioned above, that they themselves expected not my voluntary compliance; and was a tacit confession of the disagreeableness of the person they had to propose.

I was no sooner silent than my *brother* swore, although in my father's presence, (swore, unchecked either by eye or countenance) That for his part, he would *never* be reconciled to that libertine: and that he would renounce me for a sister, if I encouraged the addresses of a man so obnoxious to them all.

A man who had like to have been my brother's murderer, my *sister* said, with a face even bursting with restraint of passion.

The poor Bella has, you know, a plump high-fed face, if I may be allowed the expression. You, I know, will forgive me for this liberty of speech sooner than I can forgive myself: yet how can one be such a reptile as not to turn when trampled upon!

My father, with vehemence both of action and voice, [my father has, you know, a terrible voice when he is angry!] told me that I had met with too much indulgence in being allowed to refuse *this* gentleman, and the *other* gentleman; and it was now *his* turn to be obeyed.

Very true, my *mother* said:—and hoped his will would not now be disputed by a child so favoured.

To shew they were all of a sentiment, my uncle *Harlowe* said, he hoped his beloved niece only wanted to know her father's will, to obey it.

And my uncle *Antony*, in his rougher manner, added, That surely I would not give them reason to apprehend, that I thought my grandfather's favour to me had made me independent of them all.—If I did, he would tell me, the will *could* be set aside, and *should*.

I was astonished, you must needs think.—'Whose addresses now,' thought I, 'is this treatment preparative to?—'Mr. Wyerley's again?—or whose?' And then, as high comparisons, where *self* is concerned, sooner than low, come into young people's heads; be it for whom it will, this is wooing as the English did for the heiress of Scotland in the time of Edward the Sixth. But that it could be for Solmes, how should it enter into my head?

I did not know, I said, that I had given occasion for this harshness. I hoped I should always have a just sense of every one's favour to me, superadded to the duty I owed as a daughter and a niece: but that I was so much surprized at a reception so unusual and unexpected, that I hoped my papa and mamma would give me leave to retire, in order to recollect myself.

No one gainsaying, I made my silent compliments, and withdrew—leaving my brother and sister, as I thought, pleased; and as if they wanted to congratulate each other on having occasioned so severe a beginning to be made with me.

I went up to my chamber, and there with my faithful Hannah deplored the determined face which the new proposal it was plain they had to make me wore.

I had not recovered myself when I was sent for down to tea. I begged by my maid to be excused attending; but on the repeated command, went down with as much chearfulness as I could assume; and had a new fault to clear myself of: for my brother, so pregnant a thing is determined ill-will, by intimations equally rude and intelligible, charged my desire of being excused coming down, to sullens, because a certain person had been spoken against, upon whom, as he supposed, my fancy ran.

'I could easily answer you, Sir,' said

said I, 'as such a reflection deserves: 'but I forbear. If I do not find a 'brother in *you*, you shall have a sister 'in *me*.'

'Pretty meekness!' Bella whisperingly said; looking at my brother, and lifting up her lip in contempt.

He, with an imperious air, bid me *deserve* his love, and I should be sure to *have* it.

As we sat, my mother, in her admirable manner, expatiated upon brotherly and sisterly love; indulgently blamed my brother and sister for having taken up displeasure too lightly against me; and politically, if I may so say, answered for my obedience to my father's will.—*Then it would be all well*, my father was pleased to say: *Then they should doat upon me*, was my brother's expression: *Love me as well as ever*, was my sister's; and my uncles, *That I then should be the pride of their hearts*. —But, alas! what a forfeiture of all these must I make!

This was the reception I had on my return from you.

Mr. Solmes came in before we had done tea. My uncle Antony presented him to me, as a gentleman he had a particular friendship for. My uncle Harlowe in terms equally favourable for him. My father said, 'Mr. Solmes 'is my friend, Clarissa Harlowe.' My mother looked at him, and looked at me, now-and-then, as he sat near me, I thought with concern.—I at *her*, with eyes appealing for pity. At *him*, when I could glance at him, with disgust little short of affrightment. While my brother and sister Mr. *Solmes'd* him, and *Sirr'd* him up, at every word. So caressed, in short, by all—yet such a wretch!—But I will at present only add, My humble thanks and duty to your honoured mother; (to whom I will particularly write, to express the grateful sense I have of her goodness to me) and that I am *your ever-obliged*

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER VIII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

FEB. 24.

THEY drive on here at a furious rate. The man lives here, I think. He courts them, and is more and more a favourite. 'Such terms! 'such settlements!' That's the cry.

O my dear, that I had not reason to deplore the family-fault, immensely rich as they all are! But this I may the more unreservedly say to you, as we have often joined in the same concern: I, for a father and uncles; you, for a mother; in every other respect faultless.

Hitherto, I seem to be delivered over to my brother, who pretends as great love to me as ever.

You may believe, I have been very sincere with him. But he affects to rally me, and not to believe it possible, that one so dutiful and so discreet as his sister Clary can resolve to disoblige all her friends.

Indeed, I tremble at the prospect before me; for it is evident that they are strangely determined.

My father and mother industriously avoid giving me opportunity of speaking to them alone. They ask not for my approbation, intending, as it should seem, to *suppose* me into their will. And with them I shall hope to prevail, or with nobody. They have not the *interest* in compelling me, as my brother and sister have: I say less therefore to them, reserving my whole force for an audience of my father, if he will permit me a patient ear. How difficult is it, my dear, to give a negative where both duty and inclination join to make one wish to oblige!

I have already stood the shock of three of this man's particular visits, besides my share in his more general ones; and find it is impossible I should ever endure him. He has but a very ordinary share of understanding; is very illiterate; knows nothing but the value of estates, and how to improve them, and what belongs to land-jobbing and husbandry. Yet am I as one stupid, I think. They have begun so cruelly with me, that I have not spirit enough to assert my own negative.

They had endeavoured it seems to influence my good Mrs. Norton before I came home—so intent are they to carry their point! And her opinion not being to their liking, she has been told that she would do well to decline visiting here for the present: yet *she* is the person of all the world, next to my mother, the most likely to prevail upon me, were the measures they are en-

gaged in reasonable measures, or such as *she* could think so.

My aunt likewise, having said that she did not think her niece could ever be brought to like Mr. Solmes, has been obliged to learn another lesson.

I am to have a visit from her to-morrow. And, since I have refused so much as to hear from my brother and sister what the noble settlements are to be, she is to acquaint me with the particulars; and to receive from me my determination: for my father, I am told, will not have patience but to *suppose* that I shall stand in opposition to his will.

Mean time, it has been signified to me, that it will be acceptable if I do not think of going to church next Sunday.

The same signification was made me for last Sunday; and I obeyed. They are apprehensive that Mr. Lovelace will be there with design to come home with me.

Help me, dear Miss Howe, to a little of your charming spirit: I never more wanted it.

The man, this Solmes, you may suppose, has no reason to boast of his progress with me. He has not the sense to say any thing to the purpose. His courtship indeed is to *them*; and my brother pretends to court me as his proxy, truly!—I utterly to my brother reject his address; but thinking a person so well received and recommended by all my family, entitled to good manners, all I say against him is affectedly attributed to coyness: and he, not being sensible of his own imperfections, believes that my avoiding him when I can, and the reserves I express, are owing to nothing else: for, as I said, all his courtship is to *them*; and I have no opportunity of saying, 'No!' to one who asks me not the question. And so, with an air of *mannish* superiority, he seems rather to pity the bashful girl, than to apprehend that he shall not succeed.

FEBRUARY 25.

I HAVE had the expected conference with my aunt.

I have been obliged to hear the man's proposals from her; and have been also told what their motives are for espousing his interest with so much warmth. I am even loth to mention how equally unjust it is for him to make such offers, or for those I am bound to reverence to accept of them. I hate him more than before. One great estate is already obtained at the expence of the relations to it, though distant relations; my brother's, I mean, by his godmother: and this has given the hope, however chimerical that hope, of procuring others; and that my own at least may revert to the family. And yet, in my opinion, the world is but one great family. Originally it was so. What, then, is this narrow selfishness that reigns in us, but relationship remembered against relationship forgot?

But here, upon my absolute refusal of him upon *any* terms, have I had a signification made me that wounds me to the heart. How can I tell it you? Yet I must. It is, my dear, that I must not, for a month to come, or till licence obtained, correspond with *any*-body out of the house.

My brother, upon my aunt's report, (made, however, as I am informed, in the gentlest manner, and even giving remote hopes, which she had no commission from me to give) brought me, in authoritative terms, the prohibition.

'Not to Miss Howe?' said I.

'No, not to Miss Howe, *Madam*,' tauntingly: 'for have you not acknow-
'ledged that Lovelace is a favourite
'there?'

See, my dear Miss Howe!—

'And do you think, brother, this is
'the way—'

'Do *you* look to that.—But your
'letters will be stopped, I can tell you.'
—And away he flung.

My sister came to me soon after.—'Sister Clary, you are going on in a
'fine way, I understand. But as there
'are people who are supposed to harden
'you against your duty, I am to tell
'you, that it will be taken well if you
'avoid visits or visitings for a week or
'two till farther order.'

'Can this be from those who have
'authority—'

'Ask them; ask them, child!' with a twirl of her finger.—'I have deliver-
'ed my message. Your father will be
'obeyed. He is willing to hope you
'to be all obedience, and would pre-
'vent all *incitements* to refractoriness.'

'I know my duty,' said I; 'and hope
'I shall

'I shall not find impossible conditions 'annexed to it.'

A pert young creature, vain and conceited, she called me. I was the only judge, in my own wise opinion, of what was right and fit. She, for her part, had long seen into my specious ways: and now I should shew every-body what I was at bottom.

'Dear Bella!' said I, hands and eyes lifted up, 'why all this?—Dear, 'dear Bella, why—'

'None of your dear, dear Bella's to 'me.—I tell you, I see through your 'witchcrafts,' [That was her strange word.] And away she flung; adding, as she went, 'And so will every-body 'else very quickly, I dare say.'

'Bless me,' said I to myself, 'what 'a sister have I! How have I deserved 'this?'

Then I again regretted my grandfather's too distinguishing goodness to me.

FEB. 25. IN THE EVENING.

WHAT my brother and sister have said against me I cannot tell: but I am in heavy disgrace with my father.

I was sent for down to tea. I went with a very chearful aspect: but had occasion soon to change it.

Such a solemnity in every-body's countenance!—My mother's eyes were fixed upon the tea-cups; and when she looked up, it was heavily, as if her eye-lids had weights upon them; and then not to me. My father sat half-aside in his elbow-chair, that his head might be turned from me; his hands clasped, and waving, as it were, up and down; his fingers, poor dear gentleman! in motion, as if angry to the very ends of them. My sister sat swelling. My brother looked at me with scorn, having measured me, as I may say, with his eyes as I entered, from head to foot. My aunt was there, and looked upon me as if with kindness restrained, bending coldly to my compliment to her as she sat; and then cast an eye first on my brother, then on my sister, as if to give the reason [so I am willing to construe it] of her unusual stiffness.—Bless me, my dear! that they should chuse to intimidate rather than invite a mind, till now, not thought either unpersuadable or ungenerous!

I took my seat. 'Shall I make tea, 'Madam?' to my mother.—I always used, you know, my dear, to make tea.

'No!' a very short sentence, in one very short word, was the expressive answer. And she was pleased to take the canister in her own hand.

My brother bid the footman who attended, leave the room; 'I,' said he, 'will pour out the water.'

My heart was up at my mouth. I did not know what to do with myself. 'What is to follow?' thought I.

Just after the second dish, out stepped my mother.—'A word with you, sister 'Hervey!' taking her in her hand. Presently my sister dropped away. Then my brother. So I was left alone with my father.

He looked so very sternly, that my heart failed me, as twice or thrice I would have addressed myself to him: nothing but solemn silence on all hands having passed before.

At last, I asked, If it were his pleasure that I should pour him out another dish.

He answered me with the same angry monosyllable which I had received from my mother before; and then arose, and walked about the room. I arose too, with intent to throw myself at his feet; but was too much over-awed by his sternness, even to make such an expression of my duty to him as my heart overflowed with.

At last, as he supported himself, because of his gout, on the back of a chair, I took a little more courage; and approaching him, besought him to acquaint me in what I had offended him.

He turned from me, and in a strong voice, 'Clarissa Harlowe,' said he, 'know that I will be obeyed.'

'God forbid, Sir, that you should 'not!—I have never yet opposed your 'will—'

'Nor I your whimsies, Clarissa Har-'lowe,' interrupted he.—'Don't let 'me run the fate of all who shew in-'dulgence to your sex; to be the more 'contradicted for mine to you.'

My father, you know, my dear, has not (any more than my brother) a kind opinion of our sex; although there is not a more condescending wife in the world than my mother.

I was going to make protestations of duty—'No protestations, girl! No 'words!

'words! I will not be prated to! I will 'be obeyed! I have no child; I *will* 'have no child, but an obedient one!'

'Sir, you never had reason, I hope—'

'Tell me not what I never *had*, but 'what I *have*, and what I *shall* have.'

'Good Sir, be pleased to hear me—'my brother and my sister, I fear—'

'Your brother and sister shall not be 'spoken against, girl!—They have a 'just concern for the honour of my fa-'mily.'

'And I hope, Sir—'

'Hope nothing.—Tell me not of '*hopes*, but of *facts*. I ask nothing 'of you but what is in your *power* to 'comply with, and what it is your *duty* 'to comply with.'

'Then, Sir, I *will* comply with it—'but yet I hope from your goodness—'

'No expostulations! No *but's*, girl! 'No qualifyings! I will be obeyed, I 'tell you; and chearfully too!—or you 'are no child of mine!'

I wept.

'Let me beseech you, my dear and 'ever-honoured papa,' (and I dropped down on my knees) 'that I may have 'only yours and my mamma's will, 'and not my brother's, to obey.'

I was going on; but he was pleased to withdraw, leaving me on the floor; saying, That he would not hear me thus by subtilty and cunning aiming to distinguish away my duty; repeating, that he *would* be obeyed.

My heart is too full—so full, that it may endanger my duty, were I to try to unburden it to you on this occasion: so I will lay down my pen—but can—Yet, positively, I *will* lay down my pen!—

LETTER IX.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

FEB. 26. IN THE MORNING.

MY aunt, who staid here last night, made me a visit this morning as soon as it was light. She tells me, that I was left alone with my father yesterday on purpose that he might talk with me on my expected obedience; but that he owned he was put beside his purpose by reflecting on something my brother had told him in my disfavour, and by his impatience but to suppose, that such a gentle spirit as mine had hitherto seemed to be, should presume to dispute his will in a point where the advantage of the whole family was to be so greatly promoted by my compliance.

I find, by a few words which dropped unawares from my aunt, that they have all an absolute dependence upon what they suppose to be meekness in my temper. But in this they may be mistaken; for I verily think, upon a strict examination of myself, that I have almost as much in me of my father's as of my mother's family.

My uncle Harlowe, it seems, is against driving me upon extremities; but my brother has engaged, that the regard I have for my reputation, and my principles, will bring me *round to my duty*—that's the expression. Perhaps I shall have reason to wish I had not known this.

My aunt advises me to submit, for the present, to the interdicts they have laid me under; and, indeed, to encourage Mr. Solmes's addresses. I have absolutely refused the latter, let what will (as I have told her) be the consequence. The visiting-prohibition I will conform to: but as to that of not corresponding with you, nothing but the menace that our letters shall be intercepted can engage my observation of it.

She believes that this order is from my father, and that my mother has not been consulted upon it: she says that it is given, as she has reason to think, purely in consideration to me, lest I should mortally offend him; and this from the incitements of *other* people, (meaning you and Miss Lloyd, I make no doubt) rather than by my own will. For still, as she tells me, he speaks kind and praiseful things of me.

Here is clemency!—here is indulgence! And so it is to prevent a headstrong child, as a good prince would wish to deter disaffected subjects, from running into rebellion, and so forfeiting every thing! But this is all owing to the young man's wisdom of my brother—a plotter without a head, and a brother without a heart!

How happy might I have been with any other brother in the world but James Harlowe; and with any other sister but *his* sister! Wonder not, my dear, that I, who

who uſed to chide you for theſe ſort of liberties with my relations, now am more undutiful than you ever was unkind. I cannot bear the thought of being deprived of the principal pleaſure of my life; for ſuch is your converſation by perſon and by letter. And who, beſides, can bear to be made the dupe of ſuch low cunning, operating with ſuch high and arrogant paſſions?

But can you, my dear Miſs Howe, condeſcend to carry on a private correſpondence with me?—If you can, there is one way I have thought of by which it may be done.

You muſt remember the Green Lane, as we call it, that runs by the ſide of the wood-houſe and poultry-yard where I keep my bantams, pheaſants, and peahens, which generally engage my notice twice a day; the more my favourites becauſe they were my grandfather's, and recommended to my care by him; and therefore brought hither from my dairy-houſe ſince his death.

The lane is lower than the floor of the wood-houſe; and in the ſide of the wood-houſe the boards are rotted away down to the floor for half an ell together in ſeveral places. Hannah can ſtep into the lane, and make a mark with chalk where a letter or parcel may be puſhed in under ſome ſticks; which may be ſo managed as to be an unſuſpected cover for the written depoſits from either.

* *

I HAVE been juſt now to look at the place, and find it will anſwer: ſo your faithful Robert may, without coming near the houſe, and as only paſſing through the Green Lane, which leads to two or three farm-houſes, [out of livery if you pleaſe] very eaſily take from thence my letters, and depoſit yours.

This place is the more convenient, becauſe it is ſeldom reſorted to but by myſelf or Hannah, on the above-mentioned account; for it is the general ſtore-houſe for firing; the wood for conſtant uſe being nearer the houſe.

One corner of this being ſeparated off for the rooſting-place of my little poultry, either ſhe or I ſhall never want a pretence to go thither.

Try, my dear, the ſucceſs of a letter this way; and give me your opinion and advice what to do in this *diſgraceful* ſituation, as I cannot but call it; and what you think of my proſpects, and what you would do in my caſe.

But, before-hand, I will tell you that your advice muſt not run in favour of this Solmes: and yet, it is very likely, they will endeavour to engage your mother, in order to induce you, who have ſuch an influence over me, to favour him.

Yet, on ſecond thoughts, if you incline to that ſide of the queſtion, I would have you write your whole mind. Determined as I think I am, and cannot help it, I would at leaſt give a patient hearing to what may be ſaid on the other ſide. For my regards are not ſo much engaged [upon my word they are not; I know not myſelf if they be] to another perſon as ſome of my friends ſuppoſe; and as you, giving way to your lively vein, upon his laſt viſits, affected to ſuppoſe. What preferable favour I may have for him to any other perſon, is owing more to the uſage he has received, and for my ſake borne, than to any perſonal conſideration.

I write a few lines of grateful acknowledgment to your good mother for her favours to me in the late happy period. I fear I ſhall never know ſuch another. I hope ſhe will forgive me that I did not write ſooner.

The bearer, if ſuſpected and examined, is to produce *that* as the only one he carries.

How do needleſs watchfulneſs and undue reſtraint produce artifice and contrivance! I ſhould abhor theſe clandeſtine correſpondences, were they not forced upon me. They have ſo mean, ſo low an appearance to myſelf, that I think I ought not to expect that you ſhould take part in them.

But why (as I have alſo expoſtulated with my aunt) muſt I be puſhed into a ſtate which I have no wiſh to enter into, although I reverence it? Why ſhould not my brother, ſo many years older, and ſo earneſt to ſee me engaged, be firſt engaged? And why ſhould not my ſiſter be firſt provided for?

But here I conclude theſe unavailing expoſtulations, with the aſſurance that I am, and ever will be, *your affectionate*,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LETTER

LETTER X.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

FEB. 27.

WHAT odd heads ſome people have!—Miſs Clariſſa Harlowe to be ſacrificed in marriage to Mr. Roger Solmes!—Aſtoniſhing!

I muſt not, you ſay, *give my advice in favour of this man!*—You now convince me, my dear, that you are nearer of kin than I thought you to the family that could think of ſo prepoſterous a match, or you would never have had the leaſt notion of my adviſing in his favour.

Aſk for his picture. You know I have a good hand at drawing an ugly likeneſs. But I'll ſee a little further firſt: for who knows what may happen, ſince matters are in ſuch a train, and ſince you have not the courage to oppoſe ſo overwhelming a torrent?

You aſk me to help you to a little of my ſpirit.—Are you in earneſt? But it will not now I doubt do you ſervice—it will not ſit naturally upon you. You are your mother's girl, think what you will; and have violent ſpirits to contend with. Alas! my dear, you ſhould have borrowed ſome of mine a little ſooner—that is to ſay, before you had given the management of your eſtate into the hands of thoſe who think they have a prior claim to it. What though a *father's!*—Has not that father two elder children? And do they not both bear more of his ſtamp and image than you do?—Pray, my dear, call me not to account for this free queſtion; leſt your *application* of my meaning, on examination, prove to be as ſevere as *that*.

Now I have launched out a little, indulge me one word more in the ſame ſtrain—I will be decent, I promiſe you. I think you might have known, that AVARICE and ENVY are two paſſions that are not to be ſatisfied; the one by *giving*, the other by the envied perſon's continuing to *deſerve* and *excel*.—Fuel, fuel both, all the world over, to flames inſatiate and devouring.

But ſince you aſk for *my* opinion, you muſt tell me all you know or ſurmiſe of *their* inducements. And if you will not forbid me to make extracts from your letters for the entertainment of my aunt and couſin in the little iſland, who long to hear more of your affairs, it will be very obliging.

But you are ſo tender of ſome people who have no tenderneſs for any-body but themſelves, that I muſt conjure you to ſpeak out. Remember, that a friendſhip like ours admits of no reſerves. You may truſt my impartiality. It would be an affront to your own judgment, if you did not: for do you not *aſk* my advice? And have you not taught me that friendſhip ſhould never give a bias againſt juſtice?—Juſtify them, therefore, if you can. Let us ſee if there be any *ſenſe*, whether ſufficient *reaſon* or not, in their choice. At preſent I cannot (and yet I know a good deal of your family) have any conception how *all* of them, your mother and your aunt Hervey in particular, can join with the reſt againſt judgments given. As to ſome of the others, I cannot wonder at any-thing they do, or attempt to do, where ſelf is concerned.

You aſk, Why may not your brother be firſt engaged in wedlock? I'll tell you why: his temper and his arrogance are too well known to induce women he would aſpire to, to receive his addreſſes, notwithſtanding his great independent acquiſitions, and ſtill greater proſpects. Let me tell you, my dear, thoſe acquiſitions have given him more pride than reputation. To me he is the moſt intolerable creature that I ever converſed with. The treatment you blame, he merited from one whom he addreſſed with the air of a perſon who preſumes that he is about to confer a favour, rather than to receive one. I ever loved to mortify proud and inſolent ſpirits. What, think you, makes me bear Hickman near me, but that the man is humble, and knows and keeps his diſtance?

As to your queſtion, Why your elder ſiſter may not be firſt provided for? I anſwer, Becauſe ſhe muſt have no man, but one who has a great and clear eſtate; that's one thing. Another is, Becauſe ſhe has a younger ſiſter. Pray, my dear, be ſo good as to tell me, What man of a great and clear eſtate would think of that eldeſt ſiſter, while the younger were ſingle?

You are all too rich to be happy, child. For muſt not each of you, by the conſtitutions of your family, marry to be *ſtill* richer? People who know in what their *main* excellence conſiſts, are not to be

be blamed (are they?) for cultivating and improving what they think moſt valuable?—Is true happineſs any part of your family view?—So far from it, that none of your family but yourſelf could be happy were they *not* rich. So let them fret on, grumble and grudge, and accumulate; and wondering what ails them that they have not happineſs when they have riches, think the cauſe is want of more; and ſo go on heaping up, till Death, as greedy an accumulator as themſelves, gathers them into his garner.

Well, then, once more I ſay, do you, my dear, tell *me* what you know of their avowed and general motives; and I will tell *you* more than you will tell *me* of their failings! Your aunt Hervey, you ſay *, has told *you*. Why muſt I aſk you to let me know them, when you condeſcend to aſk my advice on the occaſion?

That they prohibit your correſponding with *me*, is a wiſdom I neither wonder at, nor blame them for; ſince it is an evidence to me that they know their own folly: and if they do, is it ſtrange that they ſhould be afraid to truſt another's judgment upon it?

I am glad you have found out a way to correſpond with me. I approve it much. I ſhall *more*, if this firſt trial of it prove ſucceſsful. But ſhould it *not*, and ſhould it fall into their hands, it would not concern me but for your ſake.

We have heard before you wrote, that all was not right between your relations and you at your coming home: that Mr. Solmes viſited you, and that with a proſpect of ſucceſs. But I concluded the miſtake lay in the perſon; and that his addreſs was to Miſs Arabella. And indeed had ſhe been as good-natured as your plump ones generally are, I ſhould have thought her too good for him by half. 'This muſt certainly be 'the thing,' thought I; 'and my be-'loved friend is ſent for to adviſe and 'aſſiſt in her nuptial preparations. 'Who knows,' ſaid I to my mother, 'but that when the man has thrown 'aſide his yellow full-buckled peruke, 'and his broad-brimmed beaver,' (both of which, I ſuppoſe, were Sir Oliver's beſt of long ſtanding) 'he may cut a 'tolerable figure dangling to chur h 'with Miſs Bell!'—The woman, as ſ e obſerves, *ſhould* excel the man in features: and where can ſhe match ſo well for a foil?

I indulged this ſurmize againſt rumour, becauſe I could not believe that the abſurdeſt people in England could be ſo *very* abſurd as to think of this man for you.

We heard, moreover, that you received no viſiters. I could aſſign no reaſon for this; except that the preparations for your ſiſter were to be private, and the ceremony ſudden, for fear this man *ſhould*, as another man *did*, change his mind. Miſs Lloyd and Miſs Biddulph were with me to enquire what I knew of this; and of your not being at church, either morning or afternoon, the Sunday after your return from us; to the diſappointment of a little hundred of your admirers, to uſe their words. It was eaſy for me to gueſs the reaſon to be what you confirm—Their apprehenſions that Lovelace would be there, and attempt to wait on you home.

My mother takes very kindly your compliments in your letter to her. Her words upon reading it were; 'Miſs 'Clariſſa Harlowe is an admirable 'young lady: wherever ſhe goes, ſhe 'confers a favour; whomever ſhe leaves, 'ſhe fills with regret.'—And then a little comparative reflection; 'O my 'Nancy, that you had a little of her 'ſweet obligingneſs!'

No matter. The praiſe was yours. You are me; and I enjoyed it. The more enjoyed it, becauſe—Shall I tell you the truth?—Becauſe I think myſelf as well as I am—Were it but for this reaſon; That had I twenty brother James's, and twenty ſiſter Bell's, not one of them, nor all of them joined together, would dare to treat me as yours preſume to treat you. The perſon who will bear much ſhall have much to bear, all the world through: it is your own ſentiment †, grounded upon the ſtrongeſt inſtance that can be given in your own family; though you have ſo little improved by it.

The reſult is this, That I am fitter for *this* world than you: you for the *next* than me—that's the difference.—But long, long, for my ſake, and for

* See Page 26.

† Page 19.

hundreds of fakes, may it be before you quit us for company more congenial to you, and more worthy of you!

I communicated to my mother the account you give of your ſtrange reception; alſo what a horrid wretch they have found out for you; and the compulſory treatment they give you. It only ſet her on magnifying her lenity to me on my *tyrannical* behaviour, as ſhe *will* call it, [mothers muſt have their way, you know, my dear] to the man whom ſhe ſo warmly recommends, againſt whom it ſeems there can be no juſt exception; and expatiating upon the complaiſance I owe her for her indulgence. So I believe I muſt communicate to her nothing farther—eſpecially as I know ſhe would condemn the correſpondence between us, and that between you and Lovelace, as clandeſtine and undutiful proceedings, and divulge our ſecret beſides: for *duty implicit* is her cry. And moreover ſhe lends a pretty open ear to the preachments of that ſtarch old batchelor your uncle Antony; and for an example to *her* daughter would be more careful how ſhe takes your part, be the cauſe ever ſo juſt.

Yet is not this right policy neither. For people who allow nothing will be granted nothing: in other words, thoſe who aim at carrying too many points will not be able to carry any.

But can you divine, my dear, what that old preachment-making plump-hearted ſoul your uncle Antony means by his frequent amblings hither?—There is ſuch ſmirking and ſmiling between my mother and him! Such mutual praiſes of œconomy; and '*That* 'is my way!'—and '*This* I do!'—and 'I am glad it has *your* approbation, 'Sir!'—and '*You* look into every-'thing, Madam!'—'Nothing would 'be done, if I *did not!*'—Such exclamations againſt ſervants! Such exaltings of ſelf! And *dear-heart*, and *good-lack!*—and *'las a-day!*—And now-and-then their converſation ſinking into a whiſpering accent, if *I* come croſs them!—I'll tell you, my dear, I don't above half like it.

Only that theſe old batchelors uſually take as many years to reſolve upon matrimony as they can reaſonably expect to live, or I ſhould be ready to fire upon his viſits; and to recommend Mr. Hickman to my mother's acceptance, as a much more eligible man: for what he wants in years, he makes up in gravity: and if you will not chide me, I will ſay, That there is a primneſs in *both* (eſpecially when the man has preſumed too much with me upon my mother's favour for him, and is under diſcipline on that account) as makes them ſeem near of kin: and then in contemplation of my ſaucineſs, and what they both bear from it, they ſigh away!—and ſeem ſo mightily to compaſſionate each other, that if pity be but one remove from love, I am in no danger, while they both are in a great deal, and don't know it.

Now, my dear, I know you will be upon me with your grave airs: *ſo in for the lamb*, as the ſaying is, *in for the ſheep*; and do you yourſelf look about you: for I'll have a pull with you by way of being aforehand. Hannibal, we read, always adviſed to attack the Romans upon their own territories.

You are pleaſed to ſay, and *upon your word too!* That your *regards* (a mighty quaint word for *affections*) *are not ſo much engaged, as ſome of your friends ſuppoſe, to another perſon.* What need you give one to imagine, my dear, that the laſt month or two has been a period extremely favourable to that *other* perſon; whom it has made an obliger of the niece for his patience with the uncles.

But, to paſs that by—*So much* engaged!—*How much*, my dear?—Shall I infer? *Some of your friends* ſuppoſe *a great deal.* You ſeem to own *a little.*

Don't be angry. It is all fair: becauſe you have not acknowledged to me that *little.* People, I have heard you ſay, who affect ſecrets, always excite curioſity.

But you proceed with a kind of drawback upon your averment, as if recollection had given you a doubt—*You know not yourſelf, if they be* [ſo much engaged.] Was it neceſſary to ſay this to me?—and to ſay it *upon your word* too?—But you know beſt.—Yet you don't neither, I believe. For a beginning love is acted by a ſubtle ſpirit; and oftentimes diſcovers itſelf to a by-ſtander, when the perſon poſſeſſed (why ſhould I not call *poſſeſſed?*) knows not it has ſuch a demon.

But further you ſay, What PREFERABLE *favour you may have for him to any*

any other perſon, is owing more to the uſage he has received, and for your ſake borne, than to any perſonal conſideration.

This is generouſly ſaid. It is in character. But, O my friend, depend upon it, you are in danger. Depend upon it, whether you know it or not, you are a little in for it. Your native generoſity and greatneſs of mind endanger you: all your friends, by fighting *againſt* him with impolitick violence, fight *for* him. And Lovelace, my life for yours, notwithſtanding all his veneration and aſſiduities, has ſeen further than that veneration, and thoſe aſſiduities, (ſo well calculated to your meridian) will let him own he has ſeen—Has ſeen, in ſhort, that his work is doing for him more effectually than he could do it for himſelf. And have you not before now ſaid, That nothing is ſo penetrating as the eye of a lover who has vanity? And who ſays Lovelace wants vanity?

In ſhort, my dear, it is my opinion, and that from the eaſineſs of his heart and behaviour, that he has ſeen more than *I* have ſeen; more than you think *could* be ſeen—more than I believe you *yourſelf* know, or elſe you would let *me* know it.

Already, in order to reſtrain him from reſenting the indignities he has received, and which are daily offered him, he has prevailed upon you to correſpond with him privately. I know he has nothing to boaſt of from *what* you have written: but is not his inducing you to receive his letters, and to anſwer them, a great point gained? By your inſiſting that he ſhould keep this correſpondence private, it appears that there is *one ſecret* which you do not wiſh the world ſhould know: and he is maſter of that ſecret. He is indeed *himſelf*, as I may ſay, that ſecret! What an intimacy does this beget for the lover! How is it diſtancing the parent!

Yet who, as things are ſituated, can blame you!—Your condeſcenſion has no doubt hitherto prevented great miſchiefs. It muſt be continued, for the ſame reaſons, while the cauſe remains. You are drawn in by a perverſe fate againſt inclination: but cuſtom, with ſuch laudable purpoſes, will reconcile the inconveniency, and *make* an inclination.—And I would adviſe you (as you would wiſh to manage on an occaſion ſo critical with that prudence which governs all your actions) not to be afraid of entering upon a cloſe examination into the true ſprings and grounds of this your *generoſity* to that happy man.

It is my humble opinion, I tell you frankly, that on enquiry it will come out to be LOVE—Don't ſtart, my dear!—Has not your man himſelf had natural philoſophy enough to obſerve already to your aunt Hervey, that love takes the deepeſt root in the ſteadieſt minds? The deuce take his ſly penetration, I was going to ſay; for this was ſix or ſeven weeks ago.

I have been tinctured, you know. Nor on the cooleſt reflection, could I account how and when the jaundice began: but had been over head and ears, as the ſaying is, but for ſome of that advice from you which I now return you. Yet my *man* was not half ſo—So *what*, my dear—To be ſure Lovelace is a charming fellow. And were he only—But I will not make you *glow*, as you read—Upon *my word* I will not.—Yet, my dear, don't you find at your heart ſomewhat unuſual make it go throb, throb, throb, as you read juſt here?—If you do, don't be aſhamed to own it—It is your *generoſity*, my love! that's all.—But, as the Roman augur ſaid, 'Cæſar, beware of the ides of 'March!'

Adieu, my deareſt friend.—Forgive, and very ſpeedily, by the new-found expedient, tell me, that you forgive,

your ever-affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XI.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1.

YOU both nettled and alarmed me, my deareſt Miſs Howe, by the concluding part of your laſt. At firſt reading it, 'I did not think it ne-'ceſſary,' ſaid I to myſelf, 'to guard 'againſt a critick, when I was writing 'to ſo dear a friend.' But then recollecting myſelf, 'Is there not more in 'it,' ſaid I, 'than the reſult of a vein 'ſo naturally lively? Surely I muſt 'have been guilty of an inadvertence. 'Let me enter into the cloſe examina-

'tion of myself which my beloved 'friend advises.'

I do so; and cannot own any of the *glow*, any of the *throbs* you mention. —*Upon my word* I will repeat I cannot. And yet the passages in my letter upon which you are so humorously severe, lay me fairly open to your agreeable raillery. I own they do. And I cannot tell what turn my mind had taken to dictate so oddly to my pen.

But, pray-now—Is it saying so much, when one, who has no very particular regard to *any* man, says, There are *some* who are preferable to *others?* And is it blameable to say, *They* are the preferable, who are not well used by one's relations; yet dispense with *that* usage out of regard to one's self which they would otherwise resent? Mr. Lovelace, for instance, I may be allowed to say, is a man to be preferred to Mr. Solmes; and that I *do* prefer him to that man: but, surely, this may be said without it's being a necessary consequence that I must be in love with him.

Indeed I would not be *in love* with him, as it it called, for the world: first, because I have no opinion of his morals; and think it a fault in which our whole family (my brother excepted) has had a share, that he was permitted to visit us with a hope; which, however being distant, did not, as I have observed heretofore*, entitle any of us to call him to account for such of his immoralities as came to our ears. Next, because I think him to be a vain man, capable of triumphing (secretly at least) over a person whose heart he thinks he has engaged. And, thirdly, because the assiduities and veneration which you impute to him, seem to carry an haughtiness in them, as if he thought his address had a merit in it, that would be more than an equivalent to a woman's love. In short, his very politeness, notwithstanding the advantages he must have had from his birth and education, appear to me to be constrained; and, with the most remarkably easy and genteel person, something, at times, seems to be behind in his *manner* that is too studiously kept in. Then, good-humoured as he is thought to be in the main to *other people's* servants, and this even to familiarity, (although, as you have observed, a familiarity that has dignity in it not unbecoming a man of quality) he is apt sometimes to break out into a passion with *his own:* an oath or a curse follows; and such looks from those servants as plainly shew terror; and that they should have fared worse had they not been in my hearing: with a confirmation in the master's looks of a surmize too well justified.

Indeed, my dear, THIS man is not THE man. I have great objections to him. My heart *throbs* not after him. I *glow* not, but with indignation against myself for having given room for such an imputation.—But you must not, my dearest friend, construe common gratitude into love. I cannot bear that you should. But if ever I should have the misfortune to think it love, I promise you *upon my word*, which is the same as *upon my honour*, that I will acquaint you with it.

You bid me to tell you very speedily, and by the new-found expedient, that I am not displeased with you for your agreeable raillery: I dispatch this therefore immediately, postponing to my next the account of the inducements which my friends have to promote with so much earnestness the address of Mr. Solmes.

Be satisfied, my dear, mean time, that I am *not* displeased with you: indeed I am not. On the contrary, I give you my hearty thanks for your friendly premonitions. And I charge you, (as I have often done) that if you observe any-thing in me so very faulty as would require from you to others in my behalf the palliation of friendly and partial love, you acquaint me with it: for methinks I would so conduct myself as not to give reason even for an *adversary* to censure me; and how shall so weak and so young a creature avoid the censure of *such*, if my *friend* will not hold a looking-glass before me to let me see my imperfections?

Judge me, then, my dear, as any indifferent person (knowing what *you* know of me) would do. I may at first be a little pained; may *glow* a little perhaps to be found less worthy of your friendship than I wish to be; but assure yourself, that your kind correction will give me reflection that shall *amend* me. If it do not, you will have a fault to accuse me of, that will be utterly *inex-*

* Letter III.

cusable:

cuſable: a fault, let me add, that ſhould you *not* accuſe me of it, (if in your opinion I am guilty) you will not be ſo much, ſo *warmly*, my friend as I am yours; ſince I have never ſpared *you* on the like occaſions.

Here I break off; to begin another letter to you; with the aſſurance, mean time, that I am, and ever will be, *your equally affectionate and grateful*

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER XII.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

THURSDAY MORN. MARCH 2.

INDEED you would not be in love with him for the world!—Your ſervant, my dear. Nor would I have you. For I think, with all the advantages of perſon, fortune, and family, he is not by any means worthy of you. And this opinion I give as well from the reaſons you mention, (which I cannot but confirm) as from what I have heard of him but a few hours ago from Mrs. Forteſcue, a favourite of Lady Betty Lawrance, who knows him well—But let me congratulate you, however, on your being the firſt of our ſex that ever I heard of, who has been able to turn that lion Love, at her own pleaſure into a lap-dog.

Well but, if you have not the throbs and the glows, you have not: and are not in love; good reaſon why, becauſe you would not be in love; and there's no more to be ſaid.—Only, my dear, I ſhall keep a good look-out upon you; and ſo I hope you will upon yourſelf: for it is no manner of argument, that becauſe you would not be in love, you therefore are not.—But before I part entirely with this ſubject, a word in your ear, my charming friend—It is only by way of caution, and in purſuance of the general obſervation, that a ſtander-by is often a better judge of the game than thoſe that play.—May it not be, that you have had, and have, ſuch croſs creatures and ſuch odd heads to deal with, as have not allowed you to attend to the throbs?—Or, if you had them a little now-and-then, whether, having had two accounts to place them to, you have not by miſtake put them to the wrong one?

But whether you have a value for Lovelace or not, I know you will be impatient to hear what Mrs. Forteſcue has ſaid of him. Nor will I keep you longer in ſuſpenſe.

An hundred wild ſtories ſhe tells of him, from childhood to manhood: for, as ſhe obſerves, having never been ſubject to contradiction, he was always as miſchievous as a monkey. But I ſhall paſs over theſe whole hundred of his puerile rogueries (although *indicative* ones, as I may ſay) to take notice as well of ſome things you are not quite ignorant of, as of others you know not; and to make a few obſervations upon him and his ways.

Mrs. Forteſcue owns, what everybody knows, that he is notoriouſly, nay, avowedly, a man of pleaſure; yet ſays, that in any thing he ſets his heart upon or undertakes, he is the moſt induſtrious and perſevering mortal under the ſun. He reſts, it ſeems, not above ſix hours in the twenty-four—any more than you. He delights in writing. Whether at Lord M.'s, or at Lady Betty's, or Lady Sarah's, he has always a pen in his fingers when he retires. One of his companions (confirming his love of writing) has told her, that his thoughts flow rapidly to his pen: and you and I, my dear, have obſerved on more occaſions than one, that though he writes even a fine hand, he is one of the readieſt and quickeſt of writers. He muſt indeed have had early a very docile genius; ſince a perſon of his pleaſureable turn and active ſpirit, could never have ſubmitted to take long or great pains in attaining the qualifications he is maſter of; qualifications ſo ſeldom attained by youth of quality and fortune; by ſuch eſpecially of thoſe of either, who, like him, have never known what it was to be controuled.

He had once it ſeems the vanity, upon being complimented on theſe talents, (and on his ſurprizing diligence, for a man of pleaſure) to compare himſelf to Julius Cæſar; who performed great actions by day, and wrote them down at night: and valued himſelf, that he only wanted Cæſar's out-ſetting, to make a figure among his cotemporaries.

He ſpoke this indeed, ſhe ſays, with an

an air of pleasantry: for she observed, and so have we, that he has the art of acknowledging his vanity with so much humour, that it sets him above the contempt which is due to vanity and self-opinion; and at the same time half-persuades those who hear him, that he really deserves the exaltation he gives himself.

But supposing it to be true that all his vacant nightly hours are employed in writing, what can be his subjects? If, like Cæsar, his own actions, he must undoubtedly be a very enterprizing and very wicked man; since nobody suspects him to have a serious turn: and, decent as he is in his conversation with us, his writings are not probably such as would redound either to his own honour, or to the benefit of others, were they to be read. He must be conscious of this, since Mrs. Fortescue says, that in the great correspondence by letters which he holds, he is as secret and as careful as if it were of a treasonable nature—yet troubles not his head with politicks, though nobody knows the interests of princes and courts better than he is said to do.

That you and I, my dear, should love to write, is no wonder. We have always, from the time each could hold a pen, delighted in epistolary correspondences. Our employments are domestick and sedentary; and we can scribble upon twenty innocent subjects, and take delight in them because they *are* innocent; though were they to be seen, they might not much profit or please others. But that such a gay, lively young fellow as this, who rides, hunts, travels, frequents the publick entertainments, and has *means* to pursue his pleasures, should be able to set himself down to write for hours together, as you and I have heard him say he frequently does, that is the strange thing.

Mrs. Fortescue says, that he is a compleat master of short-hand writing. By the way, what inducements could such a swift writer as he have to learn short-hand!

She says (and we know it as well as she) that he has a surprizing memory; and a very lively imagination.

Whatever his other vices are, all the world, as well as Mrs. Fortescue, says he is a sober man. And among all his bad qualities, *gaming*, that great waster of time as well as fortune, is not his vice: so that he must have his head as cool, and his reason as clear, as the prime of youth and his natural gaiety will permit; and by his early morning hours, a great portion of time upon his hands, to employ in writing, or worse.

Mrs. Fortescue says, he has one gentleman who is more his intimate and correspondent than any of the rest. You remember what his dismissed bailiff said of him and of his associates*. I don't find but that man's character of him was in general pretty just. Mrs. Fortescue confirms this part of it, that all his relations are afraid of him; and that his pride sets him above owing obligations to them. She believes he is clear of the world; and that he will continue so: no doubt from the same motive that makes him avoid being obliged to his relations.

A person willing to think favourably of him would hope, that a *brave*, a *learned*, and a *diligent* man, cannot be *naturally* a *bad* man.—But if he be better than his enemies say he is, (and if worse, he is bad indeed) he is guilty of an inexcusable fault in being so careless as he is of his reputation. I think a man can be so but from one of these two reasons: either that he is conscious he deserves the ill spoken of him; or, that he takes a pride in being thought worse than he is. Both very bad and threatening indications; since the first must shew him to be utterly abandoned; and it is but natural to conclude from the other, that what a man is not ashamed to have imputed to him, he will not scruple to be guilty of whenever he has an opportunity.

Upon the whole, and upon all I could gather from Mrs. Fortescue, Mr. Lovelace is a very faulty man. You and I have thought him too gay, too inconsiderate, too rash, too little an hypocrite, to be *deep*. You see he never would disguise his natural temper (haughty as it certainly is) with respect to your brother's behaviour to him. Where he thinks a contempt due, he pays it to the uttermost. Nor has he complaisance enough to spare your uncles.

* Page 16.

But

But were he deep, and ever so deep, you would soon penetrate him, if they would leave you to yourself. His vanity would be your clue. Never man had more: yet, as Mrs. Fortescue observed, never did man carry it off so happily. There is a strange mixture in it of humorous vivacity: since but for one half of what he says of himself, when he is in the vein, any other man would be insufferable.

* *

TALK *of the devil*, is an old saying. The lively wretch has made me a visit, and is but just gone away. He is all impatience and resentment at the treatment you meet with; and full of apprehensions too, that they will carry their point with you.

I told him my opinion, that you will never be brought to think of such a man as Solmes; but that it will probably end in a composition, never to have either.

No man, he said, whose fortunes and alliances are so considerable, ever had so little favour from a woman for whose sake he had borne so much.

I told him my mind as freely as I used to do. But who ever was in fault, self being judge? He complained of spies being set upon his conduct, and to pry into his life and morals, and this by your brother and uncles.

I told him, that this was very hard upon him; and the more so, as neither his life nor morals perhaps would stand a fair enquiry.

He smiled, and called himself *my servant*.—The occasion was too fair, he said, for Miss Howe, who never spared him, to let it pass.—But, Lord help the shallow souls of the Harlowes! Would I believe it? they were for turning plotters upon *him*. They had best take care he did not pay them in their own coin. Their *hearts* were better turned for such works than their *heads*.

I asked him, if he valued himself upon having a head better turned than theirs for *such works*, as he called them?

He drew off: and then ran into the highest professions of reverence and affection for you.

The object so meritorious, who can doubt the reality of his professions?

Adieu, my dearest, my noble friend! —I love and admire you for the generous conclusion of your last more than I can express. Though I began this letter with impertinent raillery, knowing that you always loved to indulge my mad vein, yet never was there a heart that more glowed with friendly love, than that of *your own*

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XIII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

WEDN. MARCH 1.

I NOW take up my pen, to lay before you the inducements and motives which my friends have to espouse so earnestly the address of this Mr. Solmes.

In order to set this matter in a clear light, it is necessary to go a little back, and even perhaps to mention some things which you already know: and so you may look upon what I am going to relate, as a kind of supplement to my letters of the 15th and 20th of January last*.

In those letters, of which I have kept memorandums, I gave you an account of my brother's and sister's antipathy to Mr. Lovelace; and the methods they took (so far as they had then come to my knowledge) to ruin him in the opinion of my other friends. And I told you, that after a very cold, yet not a directly affrontive behaviour to him, they all of a *sudden*† became more violent, and proceeded to personal insults; which brought on at last the unhappy rencounter between my brother and him.

Now you must know, that from the last conversation that passed between my aunt and me, it comes out, that this *sudden* vehemence on my brother's and sister's parts, was owing to stronger reasons than to the college-begun antipathy on his side, or to slighted love on hers; to wit, to an apprehension that my uncles intended to follow my grandfather's example in my favour; at least in a higher degree than they wish they should. An apprehension founded it seems on a conversation between my two uncles and my brother and sis-

* Letters IV, V. † See Letter IV. p. 15.

ter;

ter; which my aunt communicated to me in confidence, as an argument to prevail upon me to accept of Mr. Solmes's *noble* ſettlements; urging, that ſuch a ſeaſonable compliance would fruſtrate my brother's and ſiſter's views, and eſtabliſh me for ever in the love of my father and uncles.

I will give you the ſubſtance of this communicated converſation, after I have made a brief introductory obſervation or two: which however I hardly need to make to you who are ſo well acquainted with us all, did not the ſeries or thread of the ſtory require it.

I have more than once mentioned to you the darling view ſome of us have long had of *raiſing a family*, as it is called: a reflection, as I have often thought, upon our own; which is no inconſiderable or upſtart one, on either ſide; on my mother's eſpecially.—A view too frequently it ſeems entertained by families which, having great ſubſtance, cannot be ſatisfied without rank and title.

My uncles had once extended this view to each of us three children; urging, that as they themſelves intended not to marry, we each of us might be ſo portioned, and ſo advantageouſly matched, as that our poſterity, if not ourſelves, might make a firſt figure in our country—while my brother, as the only ſon, thought the two girls might be very well provided for by ten or fifteen thouſand pounds apiece; and that all the real eſtates in the family, to wit, my grandfather's, father's, and two uncles, and the remainder of their reſpective perſonal eſtates, together with what he had an expectation of from his godmother, would make ſuch a noble fortune, and give him ſuch an intereſt, as might entitle him to hope for a peerage. Nothing leſs would ſatisfy his ambition.

With this view he gave himſelf airs very early; That his grandfather and uncles were his ſtewards; that no man ever had better; that daughters were but incumbrances and drawbacks upon a family. And *this* low and familiar expreſſion was often in his mouth, and uttered always with the ſelf-complaiſance which an imagined happy thought can be ſuppoſed to give the ſpeaker; to wit, That a man who has ſons brings up chickens for his own table, [though once I made his compariſon ſtagger with him, by aſking him, If the ſons, to make it hold, were to have their necks wrung off?] whereas daughters are chickens brought up for the tables of other men. This accompanied with the equally polite reflection, That, to induce people to take them off their hands, the family-ſtock muſt be impaired into the bargain, uſed to put my ſiſter out of all patience: and although ſhe now ſeems to think a *younger* ſiſter only can be an incumbrance, ſhe was then often propoſing to me to make a party in our own favour againſt my brother's *rapacious views*, as ſhe uſed to call them; while I was for conſidering the liberties he took of this ſort as the effect of a temporary pleaſantry; which in a young man not naturally good-humoured, I was glad to ſee; or as a foible that deſerved raillery, but no other notice.

But when my grandfather's will (of the purport of which in my particular favour, until it was opened, I was as ignorant as they) had lopped off one branch of my brother's expectation, he was extremely diſſatisfied with me. Nobody indeed was pleaſed: for although every-one loved me, yet being the youngeſt child, father, uncles, brother, ſiſter, all thought themſelves poſtponed, as to matter of right and power. [Who loves not power?] And my father himſelf could not bear that I ſhould be made ſole, as I may call it, and independent; for ſuch the will, as to that eſtate and the powers it gave, (unaccountably as they all ſaid) made me.

To obviate therefore every one's jealouſy, I gave up to my father's management, as you know, not only the eſtate, but the money bequeathed me; (which was a moiety of what my grandfather had by him at his death; the other moiety being bequeathed to my ſiſter) contenting myſelf to take as from his bounty what he was pleaſed to allow me, without deſiring the leaſt addition to my annual ſtipend. And then I hoped I had laid all envy aſleep: but ſtill my brother and ſiſter (jealous, as now is evident, of my two uncles favour for me, and of the pleaſure I had given my father and them by this act of duty) were every now-and-then occaſionally doing me covert ill offices; of which, however, I took the leſs notice, when I was told of them, as I thought

thought I had removed the cause of their envy; and I imputed every-thing of that sort to the petulance they are both pretty much noted for.

My brother's acquisition then took place. This made us all very happy; and he went down to take possession of it: and his absence (on so good an account too) made us still happier. Then followed Lord M.'s proposal for my sister: and this was an additional felicity for the time. I have told you how exceedingly good-humoured it made my sister.

You know how that went off; you know what came on in it's place.

My brother then returned; and we were all wrong again: and Bella, as I observed in my letters above-mentioned, had an opportunity to give herself the credit of having refused Mr. Lovelace, on the score of his reputed faulty morals. This united my brother and sister in one cause. They set themselves on all occasions to depreciate Mr. Lovelace, and his *family* too, (a family which deserves nothing but respect:) and this gave rise to the conversation I am leading to between my uncles and them; of which I now come to give the particulars; after I have observed, that it happened *before* the rencounter, and soon after the enquiry made into Mr. Lovelace's affairs had come out better than my brother and sister hoped it would*.

They were bitterly inveighing against him, in their usual way, strengthening their invectives with some new stories in his disfavour; when my uncle Antony, having given them a patient hearing, declared, That he thought the gentleman behaved like a gentleman; his niece Clary with prudence; and that a more honourable alliance for the family, *as he had often told them*, could not be wished for: since Mr. Lovelace had a very good paternal estate; and that, by the evidence of an enemy, all clear. Nor did it appear, that he was so bad a man as he had been represented to be: wild indeed; but it was at a gay time of life. He was a man of sense: and he was sure that his niece would not have him, if she had not good reason to think him reformed, or that there was a likelihood that she could reform him by her example.

My uncle then gave one instance, my aunt told me, as a proof of a generosity in Mr. Lovelace's spirit, which convinced him, that he was not a bad man in nature; and that he was of a temper, he was pleased to say, like my own: which was, That when he (my uncle) had represented to him, that he might, if he pleased, make three or four hundred pounds a year of his paternal estate, more than he did; he answered, That his tenants paid their rents well; that it was a maxim with his family, from which he would by no means depart, never to rack-rent old tenants, or their descendants; and that it was a pleasure to him, to see all his tenants look fat, sleek, and contented.

I indeed had once occasionally heard him say something like this; and thought he never looked so well as at the time—except once; and that was in an instance given by him on the following incident.

An unhappy tenant of my uncle Antony came petitioning to my uncle for forbearance, in Mr. Lovelace's presence. When he had fruitlessly withdrawn, Mr. Lovelace pleaded his cause so well, that the man was called in again, and had his suit granted. And Mr. Lovelace privately followed him out, and gave him two guineas, for present relief; the man having declared, that, at the time, he had not five shillings in the world.

On this occasion, he told my uncle, (but without any airs of ostentation) That he had once observed an old tenant and his wife in a very mean habit at church; and questioning them about it next day, as he knew they had no hard bargain in their farm, the man said, He had done some very foolish things with a good intention, which had put him behind-hand, and he could not have paid his rent, and appear better. He asked him how long it would take him to retrieve the foolish step he acknowledged he had made. He said, 'Perhaps, two or three years.' —'Well, then,' said he, 'I will abate 'you five pounds a year for seven 'years, provided you will lay it out 'upon your wife and self, that you 'may make a Sunday-appearance *like* 'MY *tenants*. Mean time, take this,' (putting his hand in his pocket, and giving him five guineas) 'to put your-'selves in present plight; and let me 'see you next Sunday at church, hand

* See Letter IV. p. 15.

‘ in hand, like an honeſt and loving ‘ couple; and I beſpeak you to dine ‘ with me afterwards.’

Although this pleaſed me when I heard it, as giving an inſtance of generoſity and prudence at the ſame time, not leſſening (as my uncle took notice) the yearly value of the farm, yet, my dear, I had no *throbs*, no *glows* upon it!—*Upon my word*, I had not. Nevertheleſs, I own to you, that I could not help ſaying to myſelf on the occaſion, Were it ever to be my lot to have this man, he would not hinder me from purſuing the methods I ſo much delight to take—with, A pity, that ſuch a man were not *uniformly* good!

Forgive me this digreſſion.

My uncle went on, (as my aunt told me) That, beſides his paternal eſtate, he was the immediate heir to very ſplendid fortunes: that, when he was in treaty for his niece Arabella, Lord M. told him (my uncle) what great things he and his two half-ſiſters intended to do for him, in order to qualify him for the title, which would be extinct at his lordſhip's death, and which they hoped to procure for him, or a *ſtill higher*, that of thoſe ladies father, which had been for ſome time extinct on failure of heirs male. That it was with this view that his relations were all ſo earneſt for his marrying: that as he ſaw not where Mr. Lovelace could better himſelf, ſo, truly, he thought there was wealth enough in their own family to build up three conſiderable ones; that therefore he muſt needs ſay, he was the more deſirous of this alliance as there was a great probability, not only from Mr. Lovelace's deſcent, but from his fortunes, that his niece Clariſſa might one day be a peereſs of Great Britain. And upon that proſpect [*Here was the mortifying ſtroke*] he ſhould, for his own part, think it not wrong to make ſuch diſpoſitions as ſhould contribute to the better ſupport of the dignity.

My uncle Harlowe, it ſeems, far from diſapproving of what his brother had ſaid, declared, That there was but one objection to an alliance with Mr. Lovelace; to wit, his faulty morals: eſpecially as ſo much could be done for Miſs Bella, and for my brother too, by my father; and as my brother was actually poſſeſſed of a conſiderable eſtate by virtue of the deed of gift and will of his godmother Lovell.

Had I known this before, I ſhould the leſs have wondered at many things I have been unable to account for in my brother's and ſiſter's behaviour to me; and been more on my guard than I imagined there was a neceſſity to be.

You may eaſily gueſs how much this converſation affected my brother at the time. He could not, you know, but be very uneaſy to hear *two of his ſtewards* talk at this rate to his face.

He had from early days, by his violent temper, made himſelf both feared and courted by the whole family. My father himſelf, as I have lately mentioned, very often (long before my brother's acquiſitions had made him ſtill more aſſuming) gave way to him as to an only ſon who was to build up the name, and augment the honour of it. Little inducement therefore had my brother to correct a temper which gave him ſo much conſideration with everybody.

‘ See, ſiſter Bella,’ ſaid he, in an indecent paſſion before my uncles, on this occaſion I have mentioned—‘ ſee ‘ how it is!—You and I ought to look ‘ about us!—This little ſyren is in a ‘ fair way to *out-uncle*, as ſhe has al- ‘ ready *out-grandfather'd* us both!’

From this time (as I now find it plain upon recollection) did my brother and ſiſter behave to me, as to one who ſtood in their way; and to each other, as having but one intereſt: and were reſolved, therefore, to bend all their force to hinder an alliance from taking effect, which they believed was likely to oblige them to contract their views.

And how was this to be done, after ſuch a declaration from both my uncles?

My brother found out the way. My ſiſter (as I have ſaid) went hand in hand with him. Between them, the family-union was broken, and every-one was made uneaſy. Mr. Lovelace was received more and more coldly by all: but not being to be put out of his courſe by ſlights *only*, perſonal affronts ſucceeded; defiances next; then the rencounter: that, as you have heard, did the buſineſs; and now, if I do not oblige them, my grandfather's eſtate is to be litigated with me; and I, who never deſigned to take advantage of the independency bequeathed me, *am to be as dependent upon my father's will, as a daughter*

daughter ought to be who knows not what is good for herſelf. This is the language of the family now.

But if I will ſuffer myſelf to be prevailed upon, how happy (as *they* lay it out) ſhall we all be!—Such preſents am I to have, ſuch jewels, and I cannot tell what, from every one of the family! Then Mr. Solmes's fortunes are ſo great, and his propoſals ſo very advantageous, (no relation whom he values) that there will be abundant room to raiſe mine upon them, were the high-intended favours of my own relations to be quite out of the queſtion. Moreover it is now, with this view, found out, that I have qualifications which of *themſelves* will be a full equivalent to Mr. Solmes for the ſettlements he is to make; and ſtill leave *him* under an obligation to me for my compliance. He himſelf thinks ſo, I am told—So very poor a creature is he, even in *his* own eyes, as well as in *theirs*.

Theſe deſirable views anſwered, how rich, how ſplendid, ſhall we all three be! And I—what obligations ſhall I lay upon them all!—And that only by doing an act of duty ſo ſuitable to my character, and manner of thinking; if indeed I am the generous as well as dutiful creature I have hitherto made them believe I am.

This is the bright ſide that is turned to my father and uncles, to captivate *them:* but I am afraid that my brother's and ſiſter's deſign is to ruin me with them at any rate. Were it otherwiſe, would they not, on my return from you, have rather ſought to *court* than *frighten* me into meaſures which their hearts are ſo much bent to carry? A method they have followed ever ſince.

Mean time, orders are given to all the ſervants to ſhew the higheſt reſpect to Mr. Solmes; the *generous* Mr. Solmes is now his character with ſome of our family! But are not theſe orders a tacit confeſſion, that they think his own merit will not procure him reſpect? He is accordingly, in every viſit he makes, not only highly careſſed by the principals of our family, but obſequiouſly attended and cringed to by the menials.—And *the noble ſettlements* are echoed from every mouth.

Noble is the word uſed to enforce the offers of a man who is mean enough avowedly to *hate*, and wicked enough to propoſe to *rob* of their juſt expectations, his own family, (every one of which at the ſame time ſtands in too much need of his favour) in order to ſettle all he is worth upon me; and if I die without children, and he has none by any other marriage, upon a family which already abounds. Such are his propoſals.

But were there no other motive to induce me to deſpiſe the upſtart man, is not this unjuſt one to his family enough? —The *upſtart man*, I repeat; for he was not born to the immenſe riches he is poſſeſſed of: riches left by one niggard to another, in injury to the next heir, becauſe that other is a niggard. And ſhould I not be as culpable, do you think, in my *acceptance* of ſuch unjuſt ſettlements, as he is in the *offer* of them, if I could perſuade myſelf to be a ſharer in them, or ſuffer a reverſionary expectation of poſſeſſing them to influence my choice?

Indeed it concerns me not a little, that my friends could be brought to *encourage* ſuch offers on *ſuch* motives as I think a perſon of conſcience ſhould not preſume to begin the world with.

But this it ſeems is the only method that can be taken to diſappoint Mr. Lovelace; and at the ſame time to anſwer all my relations have to wiſh for each of us. And *ſurely* I will not ſtand againſt ſuch an acceſſion to the family as may happen from marrying Mr. Solmes: ſince now a *poſſibility* is diſcovered (which ſuch a graſping mind as my brother's can eaſily turn into a *probability*) that my grandfather's eſtate will revert to it, with a much more conſiderable one of the man's own. Inſtances of eſtates falling in, in caſes far more unlikely than this, are inſiſted upon; and my ſiſter ſays, in the words of an old Saw, *It is good to be related to an eſtate.*

While Solmes, ſmiling no doubt to himſelf at a hope ſo remote, by *offers* only, obtains all their intereſts; and doubts not to join to his own the eſtate I am envied for; which, for the conveniency of it's ſituation between two of his, will, it ſeems, be of twice the value to him that it would be of to any other perſon; and is therefore, I doubt not, a ſtronger motive with him than the wife.

Theſe, my dear, ſeem to me the principal inducements of my relations to eſpouſe ſo vehemently as they do this

man's ſuit. And here, once more, muſt I deplore the family-fault, which gives thoſe inducements ſuch a force as it will be difficult to reſiſt.

And thus far, let matters with regard to Mr. Solmes and me come out as they will, my brother has ſucceeded in his views; that is to ſay he has, in the firſt place, got my FATHER to make the cauſe his own, and to inſiſt upon my compliance as an act of duty.

My MOTHER has never thought fit to oppoſe my father's will, when once he has declared himſelf determined.

My UNCLES, ſtiff, unbroken, highly-proſperous batchelors, give me leave to ſay, (though very worthy perſons in the main) have as high notions of a child's duty, as of a wife's obedience; in the *laſt* of which, my mother's meekneſs has confirmed them, and given them greater reaſon to expect the *firſt*.

My aunt HERVEY (not extremely happy in her own nuptials, and perhaps under ſome little obligation) is got over, and chuſes not to open her lips in my favour againſt the wills of a father and uncles ſo determined.

This paſſiveneſs in my mother and in my aunt, in a point ſo contrary to their own firſt judgments, is too ſtrong a proof that my father is abſolutely reſolved.

Their treatment of my worthy Mrs. NORTON is a ſad confirmation of it: a woman deſerving of all conſideration for her wiſdom; and every-body thinking ſo; but who, not being wealthy enough to have due weight in a point againſt which ſhe has given her opinion, and which they ſeem bent upon carrying, is reſtrained from viſiting here, and even from correſponding with me, as I am this very day informed.

Hatred to Lovelace, family-aggrandizement, and this great motive *paternal authority!*—What a force *united* muſt they be ſuppoſed to have, when *ſingly* each conſideration is ſufficient to carry all before it!

This is the formidable appearance which the addreſs of this diſagreeable man wears at preſent.

My BROTHER and my SISTER triumph.—*They have got me down*, as Hannah over-heard them exult. And ſo they have, (yet I never knew that I was inſolently *up*;) for now my brother will either lay me under an obligation to comply to my own unhappineſs, and ſo make me an inſtrument of his revenge upon Lovelace; or, if I refuſe, will throw me into diſgrace with my whole family.

Who will wonder at the intrigues and plots carried on by undermining courtiers againſt one another, when a private family, but three of which can poſſibly have claſhing intereſts, and one of them (as ſhe preſumes to think) above ſuch low motives, cannot be free from them?

What at preſent moſt concerns me, is, the peace of my mother's mind! How can the huſband of *ſuch* a wife (a *good* man too!—But, oh! this prerogative of manhood!) be ſo *poſitive*, ſo *unperſuadable*, to one who has brought into the family, means, which they know ſo well the value of, that methinks they ſhould value *her* the more for *their* ſake?

They do indeed value her; but, I am ſorry to ſay, ſhe has purchaſed that value by her compliances: yet has merit for which ſhe ought to be venerated; prudence which ought of itſelf to be conformed to in every-thing.

But whither roves my pen? How dare a perverſe girl take theſe liberties with relations ſo very reſpectable, and whom ſhe highly reſpects? What an unhappy ſituation is that which obliges her, in her *own defence* as it were, to expoſe *their* failings?

But you, who know how much I love and reverence my mother, will judge what a difficulty I am under, to be obliged to oppoſe a ſcheme which *ſhe* has engaged in. Yet I *muſt* oppoſe it, (to comply is impoſſible;) and muſt without delay *declare* my oppoſition, or my difficulties will increaſe; ſince, as I am juſt now informed, a lawyer has been this very day conſulted [Would you have believed it?] in relation to ſettlements.

Were ours a Roman Catholick family, how much happier for me that they thought a nunnery would anſwer all their views!—How happy, had not a certain perſon ſlighted ſomebody! All then would have been probably concluded on between them before my brother had arrived to thwart the match: then had I had a ſiſter; which now I have not; and two brothers—both aſpiring; poſſibly both titled: while I ſhould only have valued that in either which is above title, that which is truly noble in both!

But

But by what a long-reaching selfishness is my brother governed! By what remote, exceedingly remote views! Views, which it is in the power of the slightest accident, of a fever, for instance, (the seeds of which are always vegetating, as I may say, and ready to burst forth, in his own impetuous temper) or of the provoked weapon of an adversary, to blow up and destroy!

I will break off here. Let me write ever so freely of my friends, I am sure of *your* kind construction: and I confide in your discretion, that you will avoid reading to or transcribing for others, such passages as may have the appearance of treating too freely the parental, or even the fraternal character, or induce others to censure for a supposed failure in duty to the one, or decency to the other, *your truly affectionate*,

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER XIV.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

THURSDAY EVENING, MARCH 2.

ON Hannah's depositing my long letter, (begun yesterday, but by reason of several interruptions not finished till within this hour) she found and brought me yours of this day. I thank you, my dear, for this kind expedition. These few lines will perhaps be time enough deposited to be taken away by your servant with the other letter: yet they are only to thank you, and to tell you my increasing apprehensions.

I must take or seek the occasion to apply to my mother for her mediation; for I am in danger of having a day fixed, and antipathy taken for bashfulness.—Should not sisters *be* sisters to each other? Should they not make a common cause of it, as I may say, a cause of sex, on such occasions as the present? Yet mine, in support of my brother's selfishness, and, no doubt, in concert with him, has been urging in full assembly, it seems, (and that with an earnestness peculiar to herself when she sets upon any-thing) than an absolute day be given me; and if I comply not, to be told, that it shall be to the forfeiture of all my fortunes, and of all their love.

She need not be so officious: my *brother's* interest, without hers, is strong enough; for he has found means to confederate all the family against me. Upon some fresh provocation, or new intelligence concerning Mr. Lovelace, (I know not what it is) they have bound themselves, or are to bind themselves, by a signed paper, to one another, [the Lord bless me, my dear, what shall I do!] to carry their point in favour of Mr. Solmes, in support of my *father's authority*, as it is called, and against Mr. Lovelace, as a libertine, and an enemy to the family: and if so, I am sure, I may say against *me*.—How impolitick in them all, to join two people in one interest, whom they wish for ever to keep asunder!

What the discharged steward reported of him is surely bad enough: what Mrs. Fortescue said, not only confirms that bad, but gives room to think him still worse:—and yet the *something further* which my friends have come at, is of so heinous a nature, (as Betty Barnes tells Hannah) that it proves him to be the worst of men.—But, hang the man, I had almost said—what is he to me? What *would* he be—were not this Mr. Sol——O my dear, how I hate the man in the light he is proposed to me!

All of them at the same time are afraid of Mr. Lovelace; yet not afraid to provoke him!—How am I entangled!—to be obliged to go on corresponding with him for *their* sakes—Heaven forbid that their persisted-in violence should so drive me as to make it necessary for *my own!*

But surely *they* will yield—Indeed I cannot.

I believe the gentlest spirits, when provoked, (causelessly and cruelly provoked) are the most determined. The reason may be, That not taking up resolutions lightly—their very deliberation makes them the more immoveable.—And then, when a point is clear and self-evident, how can one with patience think of entering into an argument or contention upon it?

An interruption obliges me to conclude myself, in some hurry, as well as fright, what I must ever be, *yours more than my own*,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LETTER

LETTER XV.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

FRIDAY, MARCH 3.

I Have both your letters at once. It is very unhappy, my dear, ſince your friends will have you marry, that a perſon of your merit ſhould be addreſſed by a ſucceſſion of worthleſs creatures, who have nothing but their preſumption for their excuſe.

That theſe preſumers appear not in this very unworthy light to ſome of your friends, is, becauſe their defects are not ſo ſtriking to *them* as to *others*.—And why? Shall I venture to tell you?—Becauſe they are nearer their own ſtandard—*Modeſty*, after all, perhaps has a concern in it; for how ſhould they think that a *niece* or *ſiſter* of *theirs* [I will not go higher, for fear of incurring your diſpleaſure] ſhould be an angel?

But where, indeed, is the man to be found (who has the leaſt ſhare of due diffidence) that dares to look up to Miſs Clariſſa Harlowe with hope, or with any-thing but wiſhes? Thus the bold and forward, not being ſenſible of their defects, aſpire; while the modeſty of the really worthy fills them with too much reverence to permit them to explain themſelves. Hence your Symmes's, your Byron's, your Mullins's, your Wyerley's, (the beſt of the herd) and your Solmes's, in turn, invade you—Wretches that, looking upon the reſt of your family, need not deſpair of ſucceeding in an alliance with it—But, to you, what an inexcuſable preſumption!

Yet I am afraid all oppoſition will be in vain. You muſt, you will, I doubt, be ſacrificed to this odious man. I know your family. There will be no reſiſting ſuch baits as he has thrown out. O my dear, my beloved friend! and are ſuch charming qualities, is ſuch exalted merit, to be ſunk in ſuch a marriage!—You muſt not, your uncle tells my mother, diſpute their authority. AUTHORITY! what a full word is that in the mouth of a narrow-minded perſon, who happened to be born thirty years before one!—Of your uncles I ſpeak; for as to the *parental* authority, that ought to be ſacred.—But ſhould not parents have *reaſon* for what they do!

Wonder not, however, at your Bell's un-ſiſterly behaviour in this affair: I have a particular to add to the inducements your inſolent brother is governed by, which will account for all her driving. You have already owned, that her *outward eye* was from *the firſt* ſtruck with the figure and addreſs of the man whom ſhe pretends to deſpiſe, and who, it is certain, thoroughly deſpiſes her: but you have not told me, that ſtill ſhe loves him of all men. Bell has a meanneſs in her very pride; that meanneſs riſes with her pride; and goes hand in hand with it; and no one is ſo proud as Bell. She has owned her love, her uneaſy days, and ſleepleſs nights, and her revenge grafted upon her love, to her favourite Betty Barnes—To lay herſelf in the power of a ſervant's tongue! Poor creature!—But LIKE little ſouls will find one another out, and mingle, as well as LIKE great ones. This, however, ſhe told the wench in ſtrict confidence: and thus, by way of the *female round-about*, as Lovelace had the ſaucineſs on ſuch another occaſion, in ridicule of our ſex, to call it, Betty (pleaſed to be thought worthy of a ſecret, and to have an opportunity of inveighing againſt Lovelace's perfidy, as ſhe would have it to be) told it to one of *her* confidantes: that confidante, with like injunctions of ſecreſy, to Miſs Lloyd's Harriot—Harriot to Miſs Lloyd—Miſs Lloyd to *me*—I to you—with leave to make what you pleaſe of it.

And now you will not wonder to find Miſs Bell an implacable rival, rather than an affectionate ſiſter; and will be able to account for the words *witchcraft*, *ſyren*, and ſuch-like, thrown out againſt you; and for her driving on for a fixed day for ſacrificing you to Solmes: in ſhort, for her rudeneſs and violence of every kind.

What a ſweet revenge will ſhe take, as well upon Lovelace as upon you, if ſhe can procure her rival ſiſter to be married to the man that ſiſter hates; and ſo prevent her having the man whom ſhe herſelf loves, (whether *ſhe* have hope of him or not) and whom ſhe ſuſpects her ſiſter loves!

Poiſons and poinards have often been ſet to work by minds inflamed by diſappointed *love*, and actuated by revenge—Will you wonder then, that the ties of relationſhip in ſuch a caſe have no force, and that a ſiſter forgets to be a ſiſter?

Now

Now I know this to be her secret motive, (the more grating to her, as her pride is concerned to make her disavow it) and can consider it as joined with her former *envy*, and as strengthened by a brother, who has such an ascendant over the whole family; and whose *interest* (slave to it as he always was) engaged him to ruin you with every one: both possessed of the ears of all your family, and having it as much in their power as in their will to misrepresent all you say, all you do; such subjects also as the rencounter, and Lovelace's want of morals, to expatiate upon: your whole family likewise avowedly attached to the odious man by means of the captivating proposals he has made them—when I consider all these things, I am full of apprehensions for you.—O my dear, how will you be able to maintain your ground: I am sure, (alas! I am *too* sure) that they will subdue such a fine spirit as yours, unused to opposition; and *(tell it not in Gath)* you *must* be Mrs. Solmes!

Mean time, it is now easy, as you will observe, to guess from what quarter the report I mentioned to you in one of my former, came, That the younger sister has robbed the elder of her lover*: for Betty whispered it, at the time she whispered the rest, that neither Lovelace nor you had done honourably by *her* young mistress—How cruel, my dear, in you, to rob the poor Bella of the only lover she ever had!—At the instant too that she was priding herself, that now at last she should have it in her power not only to gratify her own susceptibilities, but to give an example to the *flirts* of her sex†, (my worship's self in her eye) how to govern their man with a silken rein, and without a kerb-bridle!

Upon the whole, I have now no doubt of their persevering in favour of the despicable Solmes; and of their dependence upon the gentleness of your temper, and the regard you have for their favour, and for your own reputation. And now I am more than ever convinced of the propriety of the advice I formerly gave you, to keep in your own hands the estate bequeathed to you by your grandfather.—Had you done so, it would have procured you at least an *outward* respect from your brother and sister, which would have made them conceal the envy and ill-will that now are bursting upon you from hearts so narrow.

I must harp a little more upon this string—Do not you observe, how much your brother's influence has overtopped yours, since he has got into fortunes so considerable, and since you have given some of them an appetite to continue in themselves the possession of your estate, unless you comply with their terms?

I know your dutiful, your laudable motives; and one would have thought, that you might have trusted to a father who so dearly loved you. But had you been actually in possession of that estate, and living up to it, and upon it, (your youth protected from blighting tongues by the company of your prudent Norton, as you had proposed) do you think that your brother, grudging it to you at the time as he did, and looking upon it as his right as an only son, would have been practising about it, and aiming at it? I told you some time ago, that I thought your trials but proportioned to your prudence‡: but you will be more than woman, if you can extricate yourself with honour, having such violent spirits and sordid minds in some, and such tyrannical and despotick wills in others, to deal with. Indeed, all *may* be done, and the world be taught further to admire you for your blind duty and will-less resignation, if you can persuade yourself to be Mrs. Solmes.

I am pleased with the instances you give me of Mr. Lovelace's benevolence to his own tenants, and with his little gift to your uncle's. Mrs. Fortescue *allows* him to be the best of landlords: I might have told you *that*, had I thought it necessary to put you into some little conceit of him. He has qualities, in short, that may make him a tolerable creatures on the other side of fifty: but God help the poor woman to whose lot he shall fall till then! *Women*, I should say, perhaps; since he may break half a dozen hearts before that time.—But to the point I was upon—Shall we not have reason to commend the tenant's grateful honesty, if we are told, that with joy the poor man called out your uncle, and on the spot paid him in part of his debt those two guineas?—But what shall we say of that landlord,

* Page 8. † Page 10. ‡ Page 8.

who,

who, though he knew the poor man to be quite deſtitute, could take it; and, ſaying nothing while Mr. Lovelace ſtaid, as ſoon as he was gone, tell of it in praiſe of the poor fellow's honeſty? —Were this ſo, and were not that landlord related to my deareſt friend, how ſhould I deſpiſe ſuch a wretch?—But perhaps the ſtory is aggravated. Covetous people have every-one's ill-word: and ſo indeed they ought; becauſe they are only ſolicitous to keep that which they prefer to every-one's good one.—Covetous indeed would *they* be who deſerved *neither*, yet expected *both!*

I long for your next letter. Continue to be as particular as poſſible. I can think of no other ſubject but what relates to you and to your affairs: for I am, and ever will be, moſt affectionately, *your own*,

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XVI.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

[HER PRECEDING NOT AT THAT TIME RECEIVED.]

FRIDAY, MARCH 3.

O My dear friend, I have had a ſad conflict! Trial upon trial; conference upon conference!—But what law, what ceremony, can give a man a right to a heart which abhors him more than it does any living creature?

I hope my mother will be able to prevail for me.—But I will recount all, though I ſit up the whole night to do it; for I have a vaſt deal to write; and will be as minute as you wiſh me to be.

I concluded my laſt in a fright. It was occaſioned by a converſation that paſſed between my mother and my aunt, part of which Hannah overheard. I need not give you the particulars; ſince what I have to relate to you from different converſations that have paſſed between my mother and me in the ſpace of a very few hours, will include them all. I will begin then.

I went down this morning when breakfaſt was ready with a very uneaſy heart, from what Hannah had informed me of yeſterday afternoon; wiſhing for an opportunity, however, to appeal to my mother, in hopes to engage her intereſt in my behalf, and purpoſing to try to find one when ſhe retired to her own apartment after breakfaſt: but, unluckily, there was the odious Solmes ſitting aſquat between my mother and ſiſter, with *ſo much* aſſurance in his looks!—But you know, my dear, that thoſe we love not, cannot do any-thing to pleaſe us.

Had the wretch kept his ſeat, it might have been well enough: but the bent and broad-ſhouldered creature muſt needs riſe, and ſtalk towards a chair; which was juſt by that which was ſet for me.

I removed it to a diſtance, as if to make way to my own: and down I ſat, abruptly I believe; what I had heard all in my head.

But this was not enough to daunt him. The man is a very confident, he is a very bold, ſtaring man!—Indeed, my dear, the man is very confident!

He took the removed chair, and drew it ſo near mine, ſquatting in it with his ugly weight, that he preſſed upon my hoop.—I was ſo offended (all I had heard, as I ſaid, in my head) that I removed to another chair. I own I had too little command of myſelf. It gave my brother and ſiſter too much advantage. I dare ſay they took it. But I did it involuntarily, I think. I could not help it.—I knew not what I did.

I ſaw that my father was exceſſively diſpleaſed. When angry, no man's countenance ever ſhews it ſo much as my father's. 'Clariſſa Harlowe!' ſaid he with a big voice—and there he ſtopped. —'Sir,' ſaid I, trembling and curtſeying, (for I *had* not then ſat down again;) and put my chair nearer the wretch, and ſat down—my face, as I could feel, all in a glow.

'Make tea, child,' ſaid my kind mamma: 'ſit by me, love; and make 'tea.'

I removed with pleaſure to the ſeat the man had quitted; and being thus indulgently put into employment, ſoon recovered myſelf; and in the courſe of the breakfaſting officiouſly aſked two or three queſtions of Mr. Solmes, which I would not have done, but to make up with my father.—'*Proud ſpirits may* '*be brought to!*' whiſperingly ſpoke my ſiſter to me, over her ſhoulder, with an

an air of triumph and ſcorn: but I did not mind her.

My mother was all kindneſs and condeſcenſion. I aſked her once if ſhe were pleaſed with the tea? She ſaid ſoftly, (and again called me *dear*) ſhe was pleaſed with all I did. I was very proud of this encouraging goodneſs: and all blew over, as I hoped, between my father and me; for he alſo ſpoke kindly to me two or three times.

Small accidents theſe, my dear, to trouble you with; only as they lead to greater, as you ſhall hear.

Before the uſual breakfaſt-time was over, my father withdrew with my mother, telling her he wanted to ſpeak to her. Then my ſiſter, and next my aunt, (who was with us) dropt away.

My brother gave himſelf ſome airs of inſult, which I underſtood well enough; but which Mr. Solmes could make nothing of: and at laſt he aroſe from *his* ſeat—'Siſter,' ſaid he, 'I 'have a curioſity to ſhew you. I will 'fetch it.' And away he went; ſhutting the door cloſe after him.

I ſaw what all this was for. I aroſe; the man hemming up for a ſpeech, riſing, and beginning to ſet his ſplay-feet [indeed, my dear, the man in all his ways is hateful to me] in an approaching poſture.—'I will ſave my brother the 'trouble of bringing to me his cu-'rioſity,' ſaid I. I curtſeyed—'Your 'ſervant, Sir.'—The man cried, 'Ma-'dam, Madam,' twice, and looked like a fool.—But away I went—to find my brother, to ſave my word.—But my brother, indifferent as the weather was, was gone to walk in the garden with my ſiſter. A plain caſe, that he had left his *curioſity* with me, and deſigned to ſhew me no other.

I had but juſt got into my own apartment, and began to think of ſending Hannah to beg an audience of my mother, (the more encouraged by her condeſcending goodneſs at breakfaſt) when Shorey her woman brought me her commands to attend her in her cloſet.

My father, Hannah told me, was juſt gone out of it with a poſitive angry countenance. Then I as much dreaded the audience as I had wiſhed for it before.

I went down however; but, apprehending the ſubject ſhe intended to talk to me upon, approached her trembling, and my heart in viſible palpitations.

She ſaw my concern. Holding out her kind arms, as ſhe ſat, 'Come kiſs 'me, my dear,' ſaid ſhe, with a ſmile like a ſun-beam breaking through the cloud that overſhadowed her naturally benign aſpect. 'Why flutters my 'jewel ſo?'

This preparative ſweetneſs, with her goodneſs juſt before, confirmed my apprehenſions. My mother ſaw the bitter pill wanted gilding.

'O my mamma!' was all I could ſay; and I claſped my arms round her neck, and my face ſunk into her boſom.

'My child! my child! reſtrain,' ſaid ſhe, 'your powers of moving! I dare 'not elſe truſt myſelf with you.'—And my tears trickled down her boſom, as hers bedewed my neck.

O the words of kindneſs, all to be expreſſed in vain, that flowed from her lips!

'Lift up your ſweet face, my beſt 'child, my own Clariſſa Harlowe!—'O my daughter, beſt-beloved of my 'heart, lift up a face ſo ever-amiable 'to me!—Why theſe ſobs?—Is an ap-'prehended duty ſo affecting a thing, 'that before I can ſpeak—But I am 'glad, my love, you can gueſs at what 'I have to ſay to you. I am ſpared the 'pains of breaking to you what was 'a taſk upon me reluctantly enough 'undertaken *to* break to you.'

Then riſing, ſhe drew a chair near her own, and made me ſit down by her, overwhelmed as I was with tears of apprehenſion of what ſhe had to ſay, and of gratitude for her truly maternal goodneſs to me—Sobs ſtill my only language.

And drawing her chair ſtill nearer to mine, ſhe put her arms round my neck, and my glowing cheek wet with my tears, cloſe to her own: 'Let me talk 'to you, my child. Since ſilence is 'your choice, hearken to me, and *be* 'ſilent.

'You know, my dear, what I every 'day forego, and undergo, for the 'ſake of peace. Your papa is a very 'good man, and means well; but he 'will not be controuled; nor yet per-'ſuaded. You have ſometimes ſeemed 'to pity *me*, that I am obliged to give 'up every point. Poor man! *his* re-

'putation the leſs for it; *mine* the 'greater: yet would I not have this cre-'dit, if I could help it, at ſo dear a 'rate to *him* and to *myſelf*. You are a 'dutiful, a prudent, and a *wiſe* child,' ſhe was pleaſed to ſay, in hope, no doubt, to make me ſo: 'you would 'not add, I am ſure, to my trouble; 'you would not wilfully break that 'peace which coſts your mother ſo 'much to preſerve. Obedience is bet-'ter than ſacrifice. O my Clary Har-'lowe, rejoice my heart, by telling me 'I have apprehended too much!—I ſee 'your concern! I ſee your perplexity! 'I ſee your conflict,' [looſing her arm, and riſing, not willing I ſhould ſee how much ſhe herſelf was affected.] 'I 'will leave you a moment.—Anſwer 'me not:' [For I was eſſaying to ſpeak, and had, as ſoon as ſhe took her dear cheek from mine, dropt down on my knees, my hands claſped, and lifted up in a ſupplicating manner.] 'I am 'not prepared for your irreſiſtible ex-'poſtulation,' ſhe was pleaſed to ſay. 'I will leave you to recollection: and I 'charge you, on my bleſſing, that all 'this my truly maternal tenderneſs be 'not thrown away upon you.'

And then ſhe withdrew into the next apartment; wiping her eyes as ſhe went from me; as mine overflowed; my heart taking in the whole compaſs of her meaning.

She ſoon returned, having recovered more ſteadineſs.

Still on my knees, I had thrown my face acroſs the chair ſhe had ſat in.

'Look up to me, my Clary Harlowe —'No ſullenneſs, I hope!'

'No, indeed, my ever-to-be-revered 'mamma.'—And I aroſe. I bent my knee.

She raiſed me. 'No kneeling to 'me, but with knees of duty and com-'pliance. Your heart, not your knees, 'muſt bend. It is abſolutely deter-'mined—Prepare yourſelf therefore to 'receive your *father*, when he viſits 'you by-and-by, as he would wiſh 'to receive *you*. But on this one quar-'ter of an hour depends the peace of 'my future life, the ſatisfaction of all 'the family, and your own ſecurity 'from a man of violence: and I charge 'you *beſides*, on my bleſſing, that you 'think of being Mrs. Solmes.'

There went the dagger to my heart, and down I ſunk: and when I recovered, found myſelf in the arms of my Hannah, my ſiſter's Betty holding open my reluctantly-opened palm, my laces cut, my linen ſcented with hartſhorn; and my mother gone. Had I been *leſs* kindly treated, the hated name ſtill forborne to be mentioned, or mentioned with a little more preparation and reſerve, I had ſtood the horrid ſound with leſs viſible emotion—But to be bid, on the bleſſing of a mother ſo dearly beloved, ſo truly reverenced, to think of being Mrs. SOLMES—what a denunciation was that!

Shorey came in with a meſſage, (delivered in her ſolemn way;) 'Your 'mamma, Miſs, is concerned for your 'diſorder: ſhe expects you down again 'in an hour; and bid me ſay, that ſhe 'then hopes every-thing from your 'duty.'

I made no reply; for what could I ſay? And leaning upon my Hannah's arm, withdrew to my own apartment. There you will gueſs how the greateſt part of the hour was employed.

Within that time, my mother came up to *me*.

'I love,' ſhe was pleaſed to ſay, 'to 'come into *this* apartment!—No emo-'tions, child! No flutters!—Am I not 'your mother!—Am I not your fond, 'your indulgent mother!—Do not diſ-'compoſe *me* by diſcompoſing *yourſelf!* 'Do not occaſion *me* uneaſineſs, when 'I would give *you* nothing but pleaſure. 'Come, my dear, we will go into 'your cloſet.'

She took my hand, led the way, and made me ſit down by her: and after ſhe had enquired how I did, ſhe began in a ſtrain as if ſhe had ſuppoſed I had made uſe of the intervening ſpace to overcome all my objections.

She was pleaſed to tell me, that my father and ſhe, in order to ſpare my natural modeſty, had taken the whole affair upon themſelves—

'Hear me out; and then ſpeak;' for I was going to expoſtulate. 'You are 'no ſtranger to the end of Mr. Solmes's 'viſits—'

'O Madam!'

'Hear me out; and then ſpeak.—He 'is not indeed every-thing I wiſh him 'to be: but he is a man of probity, and 'has no vices—'

'No vices, Madam!'

'Hear

Plate XVI. Publish'd as the Act directs, by Harrison & C.° April 3. 1784.

'Hear me out, child—You have not 'behaved much amiss to him: we 'have seen with pleasure that you have 'not—'

'O Madam, must I not now speak!'

'I shall have done presently—A 'young creature of your virtuous and '*pious* turn,' she was pleased to say, 'cannot surely love a profligate: you 'love your brother too well, to wish 'to marry one who had like to have 'killed him, and who threatened your 'uncles, and defies us all. You have 'had your own way six or seven times: 'we want to secure you against a man 'so vile. Tell me (I have a *right* to 'know) whether you prefer this man 'to all others?—Yet God forbid that I 'should know you do! for such a de-'claration would make us all misera-'ble. Yet tell me, are your affections 'engaged to this man?'

I knew what the inference would be, if I had said they were not.

'You hesitate—you answer me not '—you cannot answer me.'—*Rising.* '—Never more will I look upon you 'with an eye of favour!'

'O Madam, Madam! Kill me not 'with your displeasure—I would not, 'I *need* not, hesitate one moment, did 'I not dread the inference, if I answer 'you as you wish.—Yet, be that infe-'rence what it will, your threatened 'displeasure will make me speak. And 'I declare to you, that I know not my 'own heart, if it be not absolutely free. 'And pray, let me ask my dearest mam-'ma, in what has my conduct been 'faulty, that, like a giddy creature, I 'must be forced to marry, to save me 'from—From what? Let me beseech 'you, Madam, to be the guardian of 'my reputation—let not your Clarissa 'be precipitated into a state she wishes 'not to enter into with any man! And 'this upon a supposition that otherwise 'she shall marry herself, and disgrace 'her whole family.'

'Well, then, Clary,' [passing over the force of my plea] 'if your heart be 'free—'

'O my beloved mamma, let the usual 'generosity of your dear heart operate 'in my favour. Urge not upon me 'the inference that made me hesitate.'

'I won't be interrupted, Clary—'You have seen in my behaviour to 'you, on this occasion, a truly ma-'ternal tenderness; you have observed 'that I have undertaken this task with 'some reluctance, because the man is 'not every-thing; and because I know 'you carry your notions of perfection 'in a man too high—'

'Dearest Madam, this one time ex-'cuse me!—Is there then any danger 'that I should be guilty of an impru-'dent thing for the man's sake you 'hint at?'

'Again interrupted!—Am I to be 'questioned, and argued with? You 'know this won't do somewhere else. 'You *know* it won't. What reason 'then, ungenerous girl, can you have 'for arguing with me thus, but be-'cause you think from my indulgence 'to you, you may?'

'What *can* I say? What *can* I do? 'What must that cause be that will 'not bear being argued upon?'

'Again! Clary Harlowe!'

'Dearest Madam, forgive me: it was 'always my pride and my pleasure to 'obey you. But look upon that man '—see but the disagreeableness of his 'person.'

'Now, Clary, do I see whose person 'you have in your eye!—Now is Mr. 'Solmes, I see, but *comparatively* 'disagreeable; disagreeable only as 'another man has a much more spe-'cious person.'

'But, Madam, are not his manners 'equally so?—Is not his person the 'true representative of his mind?—'That other man is not, shall not be, 'any-thing to me, release me but from 'this one man, whom my heart, un-'bidden, resists.'

'Condition thus with your father. 'Will *he* bear, do you think, to be 'thus dialogued with? Have I not 'conjured you, as you value my 'peace—What is it that *I* do not give 'up?—This very task, because I ap-'prehended you would not be *easily* 'persuaded, is a task *indeed* upon me. 'And will *you* give up nothing? Have 'you not refused as many as have been 'offered to you? If you would not 'have us guess for whom, comply; 'for comply you must, or be looked 'upon as in a state of defiance with 'your whole family.'

And saying this, she arose, and went from me. But at the chamber-door stopped; and turned back: 'I will not 'say below in what a disposition I 'leave you. Consider of every-thing.

'The matter is resolved upon. As 'you value your father's blessing and 'mine, and the satisfaction of all the 'family, resolve to comply. I will 'leave you for a few moments. I will 'come up to you again. See that I 'find you as I wish to find you; and 'since *your heart is free*, let your 'duty govern it.'

In about half an hour, my mother returned. She found me in tears. She took my hand: 'It is my part ever-'more,' said she, 'to be of the ac-'knowledging side. I believe I have 'needlessly exposed myself to your op-'position, by the method I have taken 'with you. I first began as if I *ex-'pected* a denial, and by my indul-'gence brought it upon myself.'

'Do not, my dearest mamma! do 'not say so!'

'Were the occasion for this debate,' proceeded she, 'to have risen from my-'self; were it in my power to dispense 'with your compliance; you too well 'know what you can do with me.'

Would any-body, my dear Miss Howe, wish to marry, who sees a wife of such a temper, and blessed with such an understanding as my mother is noted for, not only deprived of all power, but obliged to be even *active* in bringing to bear points of high importance, which she thinks ought not to be insisted upon?

'When I came to you a second time,' proceeded she, 'knowing that your op-'position would avail you nothing, I 'refused to hear your reasons: and in 'this I was wrong too, because a 'young creature who loves to reason, 'and *used* to love to be convinced by 'reason, ought to have all her objec-'tions heard. I now therefore, this 'third time, see you; and am come 'resolved to hear all you have to say: 'and let me, my dear, by my patience 'engage your gratitude; your *genero-'sity*, I will call it; because it is to 'you I speak, who used to have a 'mind wholly generous.—Let me, if 'your heart *be really free*, let me see 'what it will induce you to do to 'oblige me: and so as you permit 'your usual discretion to govern you, 'I will hear all you have to say; but 'with this intimation, that say what 'you will, it will be of no avail else-'where.'

'What a dreadful saying is that! 'But could I engage your pity, Ma-'dam, it would be somewhat.'

'You have as much of my pity, as 'of my love. But what is *person*, 'Clary, with one of your prudence, 'and *your heart disengaged?*'

'Should the eye be disgusted, when 'the heart is to be engaged?—O Ma-'dam, who can think of marrying 'when the heart is shocked at the first 'appearance, and where the disgust 'must be confirmed by every conver-'sation afterwards?'

'This, Clary, is owing to your 'prepossession. Let me not have cause 'to regret that noble firmness of mind 'in so young a creature which I thought 'your glory, and which was my boast 'in your character. In this instance 'it would be obstinacy, and want of 'duty.—Have you not made objec-'tions to several—'

'That was to their *minds*, to their '*principles*, Madam.—But this man—'

'Is an honest man, Clary Harlowe. 'He has a good mind. He is a vir-'tuous man.'

'*He* an honest man? *His* a good mind, 'Madam? *He* a virtuous man!'

'Nobody denies him these quali-'ties.'

'Can *he* be an honest man who of-'fers terms that will rob all his own 'relations of their just expectations—'Can *his* mind be good?'

'You, Clary Harlowe, for whose 'sake he offers so much, are the last 'person that should make this obser-'vation.'

'Give me leave to say, Madam, 'that a person preferring happiness to 'fortune, as I do, that want not even 'what I *have*, and can give up the 'use of *that*, as an instance of duty—'

'No more, no more of your merits! '—You know you will be a gainer by 'that chearful instance of your duty; 'not a loser. You know you have 'but *cast your bread upon the waters* '—so no more of that!—For it is not 'understood as a merit by every-body, 'I assure you; though I think it a high 'one; and so did your father and un-'cles at the time.'

'At the *time*, Madam!—How un-'worthily do my brother and sister, 'who are afraid that the favour I was 'so lately in—'

'I hear

'I hear nothing againſt your brother and ſiſter—What family-feuds 'have I in proſpect, at a time when I 'hoped moſt comfort from you all?'

'God bleſs my brother and ſiſter in 'all their *worthy* views! You ſhall 'have no family-feuds, if I can prevent them. You yourſelf, Madam, 'ſhall tell me what I ſhall bear from 'them, and I will bear it: but let *my* actions, not *their* miſrepreſentations, '(as I am ſure by the diſgraceful prohibitions I have met with has been 'the caſe) ſpeak for me.'

Juſt then, up came my father, with a ſternneſs in his looks that made me tremble.—He took two or three turns about my chamber, though pained by his gout.—And then ſaid to my mother, who was ſilent as ſoon as ſhe ſaw him—

'My dear, you are long abſent.—'Dinner is near ready. What you 'had to ſay, lay in a very little compaſs. Surely, you have nothing to 'do but to declare *your* will, and *my* 'will—But perhaps you may be talking of the preparations—Let us have 'you ſoon down—Your daughter in 'your hand, if worthy of the name.'

And down he went, caſting his eye upon me with a look ſo ſtern, that I was unable to ſay one word to him, or even for a few minutes to my mother.

Was not this very intimidating, my dear?

My mother, ſeeing my concern, ſeemed to pity me. She called me her good child, and kiſſed me; and told me that my father ſhould not know I had made ſuch oppoſition. 'He has 'kindly furniſhed us with an excuſe 'for being ſo long together,' ſaid ſhe. '—Come, my dear—dinner will be 'upon table preſently—Shall we go 'down?'—And took my hand.

This made me ſtart. 'What, Madam, go down to let it be ſuppoſed we 'were talking of *preparations*!—O my 'beloved mamma, command me not 'down upon ſuch a ſuppoſition.'

'You ſee, child, that to ſtay longer 'together, will be owning that you 'are debating about an abſolute duty: 'and that will not be borne. Did not 'your father himſelf ſome days ago 'tell you, he would be obeyed? I will 'a third time leave you. I muſt ſay 'ſomething by way of excuſe for you: 'and that you deſire not to go down to 'dinner—That your modeſty on the 'occaſion—'

'O Madam! ſay not my modeſty on '*ſuch* an occaſion: for that will be to 'give hope—'

'And deſign you *not* to give hope? '—Perverſe girl!'—*Riſing, and flinging from me.* 'Take more time for 'conſideration!—Since it is neceſſary, '*take* more time—And when I ſee you 'next, let me know what blame I 'have to caſt upon myſelf, or to bear 'from your father, for my indulgence 'to you.'

She made, however, a little ſtop at the chamber-door; and ſeemed to expect that I would have beſought her to make the gentleſt conſtruction for me; for, heſitating, ſhe was pleaſed to ſay, 'I ſuppoſe you would not have me 'make a report—'

'O Madam,' interrupted I, 'whoſe 'favour can I hope for, if I loſe my 'mamma's?'

To have deſired a *favourable* report, you know, my dear, would have been qualifying upon a point that I was too much determined upon, to give room for any of my friends to think I have the leaſt heſitation about it. And ſo my mother went down ſtairs.

I will depoſit thus far; and, as I know you will not think me too minute in my relation of particulars ſo very intereſting to one you honour with your love, proceed in the ſame way. As matters ſtand, I don't care to have papers ſo freely written about me.

Pray let Robert call every day, if you can ſpare him, whether I have any-thing ready or not.

I ſhould be glad you would not ſend him empty-handed. What a generoſity will it be in you, to write as frequently from friendſhip, as I am forced to do from misfortune! The letters being taken away will be an aſſurance that you have them. As I ſhall write and depoſit as I have opportunity, the formality of *ſuper* and *ſub*-ſcription will be excuſed. For I need not ſay how much I am *your ſincere and ever-affectionate*

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER

LETTER XVII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

MY mother, on her return, which was as soon as she had dined, was pleased to inform me, that she told my father, on his questioning her about my *chearful* compliance, (for it seems the *chearful* was all that was doubted) that she was willing, on so material a point, to give a child whom she had so *much reason to love*, (as the condescended to acknowledge were her words) liberty to say all that was in her heart to say, that her compliance might be the freer: letting him know, that when he came up, she was attending to my pleas; for that she found I had rather not marry at all.

She told me, that to this my father angrily said, 'Let her take care—let 'her take care—that she give me not 'ground to suspect her of a preference 'somewhere else. But, if it be to 'ease *her* heart, and not to dispute *my* 'will, you may hear her out.'

'So, Clary,' said my mother, 'I 'am returned in a temper accordingly: 'and I hope you will not again, by '*your* peremptoriness, shew *me*, how 'I ought to treat *you*.'

'Indeed, Madam, you did me jus-'tice, to say I have no inclination to 'marry at all. I have not, I hope, 'made myself so *very* unuseful in my 'papa's family, as—'

'No more of your merits, Clary! 'You have been a good child. You 'have eased me of all the family-'cares: but do not now give more than 'ever you relieved me from. You 'have been amply repaid in the repu-'tation your skill and management 'have given you: but now there is 'soon to be a period to all those assist-'ances from you. If you marry, 'there will be a natural, and, if to 'please us, a desirable period; be-'cause your own family will employ 'all your talents in that way: if you 'do not, there will be a period like-'wise, but *not* a natural one—You un-'derstand me, child.'

I wept.

'I have made enquiry already after 'a housekeeper. I would have had 'your good Norton; but I suppose you 'will yourself wish to have the wor-'thy woman with you. If you de-'sire it, that shall be agreed upon for 'you.'

'But why, dearest Madam, why 'am I, the *youngest*, to be precipitated 'into a state, that I am very far from 'wishing to enter into with any-body?'

'You are going to question me, I 'suppose, why your sister is not thought 'of for Mr. Solmes?'

'I hope, Madam, it will not dis-'please you, if I were?'

'I might refer you for an answer to 'your *father*.—Mr. Solmes has rea-'sons for preferring *you*.'

'And I have reasons, Madam, for 'disliking *him*.—And why am I—'

'This quickness upon me,' inter-rupted my mother, 'is not to be borne! 'I am gone, and your father comes, 'if *I* can do no good with you.'

'O Madam, I would rather die, 'than—'

She put her hand to my mouth.—'No peremptoriness, Clary Harlowe: 'once you declare yourself inflexible, 'I have done.'

I wept for vexation. 'This is all, 'all, my brother's doings—his grasp-'ing views!'

'No reflections upon your brother: 'he has entirely the honour of the fa-'mily at heart.'

'I would no more dishonour my 'family, Madam, than my brother 'would.'

'I believe it: but I hope you will 'allow your father, and me, and your 'uncles, to judge what will do it ho-'nour, what dishonour.'

I then offered to live single; never to marry at all; or never but with their full approbation.

'If you mean to shew your duty, 'and your obedience, Clary, you must 'shew it in *our* way, not in *your own*.'

'I hope, Madam, that I have not 'so behaved hitherto, as to render such 'a trial of my obedience necessary.'

'Yes, Clary, I cannot but say that 'you have hitherto behaved extremely 'well: but you have had no trials till 'now; and I hope, that now you are 'called to one, you will not fail in it. 'Parents,' proceeded she, 'when 'children are young, are pleased with 'every-thing they do. You have been

'a good

'a good child upon the whole: but we 'have hitherto rather complied with 'you, than you with us. Now that 'you are grown up to marriageable 'years, is the teſt; eſpecially as your 'grandfather has made you indepen- 'dent, as we may ſay, in preference to 'thoſe who had prior expectations 'upon that eſtate.'

'Madam, my grandfather knew, 'and expreſsly mentioned in his will 'his deſire, that my father will more 'than make it up to my ſiſter. I did 'nothing but what I thought my duty 'to procure his favour. It was rather 'a mark of his affection, than any ad- 'vantage to me: for, do I either ſeek 'or wiſh to be independent? Were I 'to be queen of the univerſe, that 'dignity ſhould not abſolve me from 'my duty to you and to my father. I 'would kneel for your bleſſings, were 'it in the preſence of millions—So 'that—'

'I am loth to interrupt *you*, Clary; 'though you could more than once 'break in upon *me*. You are young 'and unbroken: but, with all this 'oſtentation of your duty, I deſire you 'to ſhew a little more deference to me 'when I am ſpeaking.'

'I beg your pardon, dear Madam, 'and your patience with me on *ſuch* 'an occaſion as *this*. If I did not 'ſpeak with earneſtneſs upon it, I 'ſhould be ſuppoſed to have only maid- 'enly objections againſt a man I never 'can endure.'

'Clary Harlowe!'

'Deareſt, deareſt Madam, permit 'me to ſpeak what I have to ſay, this 'once—It is hard, it is *very* hard, to 'be forbidden to enter into the cauſe 'of all theſe miſunderſtandings, be- 'cauſe I muſt not ſpeak diſreſpectfully 'of one who ſuppoſes me in the way 'of his ambition, and treats me like 'a ſlave—'

'Whither, whither, Clary!'

'My deareſt mamma!—My duty 'will not permit me ſo far to ſuppoſe 'my father arbitrary, as to make a 'plea of that arbitrarineſs to you.'

'How now, Clary!—O girl!'

'Your patience, my deareſt mam- 'ma:—you were pleaſed to *ſay*, you 'would hear me with patience.—PER- 'SON in a man is nothing, becauſe I 'am ſuppoſed to be prudent: ſo my eye 'is to be diſguſted, and my reaſon not 'convinced.'

'Girl, girl!'

'Thus are my imputed good quali- 'ties to be made my puniſhment; and 'I am to be wedded to a *monſter*—'

'[Aſtoniſhing!—Can this, Clariſſa, 'be from you?'

'The man, Madam, perſon and 'mind, is a monſter in my eye.]—And 'that I may be induced to bear this 'treatment, I am to be complimented 'with being indifferent to all men: 'yet, at other times, and to ſerve other 'purpoſes, be thought prepoſſeſſed in 'favour of a man againſt whoſe moral 'character lie *juſt* objections.—Con- 'fined, as if, like the giddieſt of 'creatures, I would run away with 'this man, and diſgrace my whole fa- 'mily!—O my deareſt mamma! who 'can be patient under ſuch treatment?'

'Now, Clary, I ſuppoſe you will al- 'low *me* to ſpeak. I think I have had 'patience *indeed* with you. Could I 'have thought—But I will put all up- 'on a ſhort iſſue. Your *mother*, Cla- 'riſſa, ſhall ſhew you an example of 'that patience you ſo boldly claim 'from *her*, without having *any your-* 'ſelf.'

O my dear, how my mother's con- deſcenſion diſtreſſed me at the time!—Infinitely more diſtreſſed me, than ri- gour could have done. But ſhe *knew*, ſhe was to be ſure *aware*, that ſhe was put upon a harſh, upon an *unreaſonable* ſervice, let me ſay, or ſhe would not, ſhe could not, have had ſo much pa- tience with me.

'Let me tell you then,' proceeded ſhe, 'that all lies in a ſmall compaſs, 'as your father ſaid.—You have been 'hitherto, as you are pretty ready to 'plead, a dutiful child. You have 'indeed had no *cauſe* to be otherwiſe. 'No child was ever more favoured. 'Whether you will diſcredit all your 'paſt behaviour; whether, at a time 'and upon an occaſion, that the higheſt 'inſtance of duty is expected from 'you; (an inſtance that is to crown 'all) and when you declare that *your* 'heart is free—you will give that in- 'ſtance; or whether, having a view to 'the independence you may claim, '(for ſo, Clary, whatever be your mo- 'tive, it will be judged) and which 'any man you favour, can aſſert *for*

'*you*

'*you againſt* us all; or rather *for him-*
'*ſelf* in *ſpite* of us—whether, I ſay,
'you will break with us all, and ſtand
'in defiance of a jealous father, need-
'leſsly jealous, I will venture to ſay,
'of the prerogatives of his ſex, as to
'me, and ſtill ten times more jealous
'of the authority of a father—this is
'now the point with us. You know
'your father has made it a point; and
'did he ever give up one he thought he
'had a right to carry?'

'Too true!' thought I to myſelf.
'And now my brother has engaged my
'father, his fine ſcheme will *walk*
'*alone*, without needing his leading-
'ſtrings; and it is become my *father's*
'*will* that I oppoſe; not my brother's
'graſping views.'

I was ſilent. To ſay the truth, I was juſt then *ſullenly* ſilent. My heart was too big. I thought it was hard to be thus given up by my mother; and that ſhe ſhould make a will ſo uncontroulable as my brother's, her will.—My mother, my dear, though I muſt not ſay ſo, was not obliged to marry againſt *her* liking. My mother loved my father.

My ſilence availed me ſtill leſs.

'I ſee, my dear,' ſaid ſhe, 'that
'you are convinced. Now, my good
'child, now, my Clary, do I love
'you! It ſhall not be known, that you
'have argued with me at all. All
'ſhall be imputed to that modeſty
'which has ever ſo much diſtinguiſhed
'you. You ſhall have the full merit
'of your reſignation.'

I wept.

She tenderly wiped the tears from my eyes, and kiſſed my cheek.—'Your
'father expects you down with a chear-
'ful countenance—but I will excuſe
'your going. All your ſcruples, you
'ſee, have met with an indulgence
'truly maternal from me. I rejoice
'in the hope that you are convinced.
'This indeed ſeems to be a proof of
'the truth of your agreeable declara-
'tion, that *your heart is free*.'

Did not this ſeem to border upon *cruelty*, my dear, in ſo indulgent a mother?—It would be wicked [Would it not!] to ſuppoſe my mother capable of *art*—but ſhe is put upon it; and obliged to take methods to which her heart is naturally above ſtooping; and all intended for my good, becauſe ſhe ſees that no arguing will be admitted anywhere elſe!

'I will go down,' proceeded ſhe,
'and excuſe your attendance at af-
'ternoon-tea, as I did to dinner: for
'I know you will have ſome little re-
'luctances to ſubdue. I will allow
'you thoſe; and alſo ſome little natu-
'ral ſhyneſſes—And ſo you *ſhall not*
'come down, if you chuſe *not* to come
'down—Only, my dear, do not diſ-
'grace my report when you come to
'ſupper. And be ſure behave as you
'uſed to do to your brother and ſiſter;
'for your behaviour to them will be
'one teſt of your chearful obedience to
'us. I adviſe as a friend, you ſee, ra-
'ther than command as a mother—So
'adieu, my love.' And again ſhe kiſſed me; and was going.

'O my dear mamma,' ſaid I, 'for-
'give me!—But ſurely you cannot be-
'lieve I can ever think of having that
'man!'

She was very angry, and ſeemed to be greatly diſappointed. She threatened to turn me over to my father and my uncles:—ſhe, however, bid me (generouſly bid me) conſider, what a handle I gave to my brother and ſiſter, if I thought they had views to ſerve by making my uncles diſſatisfied with me.

'I,' ſaid ſhe, in a milder accent,
'have early ſaid all that I thought could
'be ſaid againſt the preſent propoſal, on
'a ſuppoſition that you, who have re-
'fuſed ſeveral others, (whom I own to
'be preferable as to perſon) would *not*
'approve of it; and could I have ſuc-
'ceeded, you, Clary, had never heard
'of it. But if *I* could not, how can *you*
'expect to prevail? My great ends, in
'the taſk I have undertaken, are the
'preſervation of the family-peace, ſo
'likely to be overturned; to reinſtate
'you in the affections of your father
'and uncles: and to preſerve you from
'a man of violence.—Your father, you
'muſt needs think, will flame out, upon
'your refuſal to comply: your uncles
'are ſo thoroughly convinced of the
'conſiſtency of the meaſure with their
'favourite views of aggrandizing the
'family, that they are as much deter-
'mined as your father—Your aunt
'Hervey and your uncle Hervey are of
'the ſame party. And it is hard, if a
'father and mother, and uncles, and
'aunt, all conjoined, cannot be allowed

'to

'to direct your choice.—Surely, my dear girl,' proceeded she, [for I was silent all this time] 'it cannot be, that 'you are the *more* averse, because the *family views* will be promoted by the 'match—This, I assure you, is what 'every-body must think, if you com-'ply not. Nor, while the man so ob-'noxious to us all, remains unmar-'ried, and *buzzes* about you, will the 'strongest asseverations you can make 'of your resolution and wishes to live 'single, be in the least regarded. And 'well you know, that were Mr. Love-'lace an angel, and your father had 'made it a point that you should not 'have him, it would be in vain to dis-'pute his will. As to the prohibition 'laid upon you, (much as I will own 'against *my* liking) that is owing to 'the belief that you corresponded by 'Miss Howe's means with that man; 'nor do I doubt that you did so.'

I answered to every article, in such a manner, as I am sure would have satisfied her, could she have been permitted to judge for herself; and I then inveighed with bitterness against the disgraceful prohibitions laid upon me.

They would serve to shew me, she was pleased to say, how much in earnest my father was. They might be taken off, whenever I thought fit, and no harm done, nor disgrace received. But if I were to be contumacious, I might thank myself for all that would follow.

I sighed. I wept. I was silent.

'Shall I, Clary,' said she, 'shall I 'tell your father that these prohibitions 'are as unnecessary as I hoped they 'would be? That you know your *duty*, 'and will not offer to controvert his 'will? What say you, my love?'

'O Madam! what can I say to ques-'tions so indulgently put?—I do in-'deed *know* my duty: no creature in 'the world is more willing to *practise* 'it: but, pardon me, dearest Madam, 'if I say that I must bear these prohi-'bitions, if I am to pay so dear to have 'them taken off.'

Determined and perverse, my dear mamma called me: and after walking twice or thrice in anger about the room, she turned to me—'Your heart *free*, 'Clarissa! How can you tell me your 'heart is free? Such extraordinary an-'tipathies to a particular person must 'be owing to extraordinary prepossess-'sions in another's favour!—Tell me, 'Clary; and tell me truly—Do you 'not continue to correspond with Mr. 'Lovelace?'

'Dearest Madam,' replied I, 'you 'know my motives: to prevent mis-'chief, I answered his letters. The 'reasons for our apprehensions of this 'sort are not over.'

'I own to you, Clary, (although 'now I would not have it known) that 'I once thought a little qualifying 'among such violent spirits was not 'amiss. I did not know but all things 'would come round again by the me-'diation of Lord M. and his two sisters: 'but as they all three think proper to 'resent for their nephew; and as their 'nephew thinks fit to defy us all; and 'as terms are offered on the other hand, 'that could not be asked, which will 'very probably prevent your grandfa-'ther's estate going out of the family, 'and may be a means to bring still 'greater into it; I see not that the con-'tinuance of your correspondence with 'him either can or ought to be per-'mitted. I therefore now forbid it to 'you, as you value my favour.'

'Be pleased, Madam, only to advise 'me how to break it off with safety to 'my brother and uncles; and it is all 'I wish for. Would to Heaven, the 'man so hated had not the pretence to 'make of having been too violently 'treated, when he meant peace and re-'conciliation! It would always have 'been in my own power to have broke 'with him. His reputed immoralities 'would have given me a just pretence 'at any time to do so—But, Madam, 'as my uncles and my brother will keep 'no measures; as he has heard what 'the view is; and as I have reason to 'think that he is only restrained by his 'regard for me from resenting their 'violent treatment of him and his fa-'mily; what can I do? Would you 'have me, Madam, make him despe-'rate?'

'The law will protect us, child! 'Offended magistracy will assert it-'self.'

'But, Madam, may not some dread-'ful mischief first happen?—The law 'asserts not itself, till it *is* offended.'

'You have made offers, Clary, if 'you might be obliged in the point in 'question—Are you really in earnest,

'were you to be complied with, to break off all correſpondence with Mr. Lovelace?—Let me know this.'

'Indeed I am; and I will. You, Madam, ſhall ſee all the letters that have paſſed between us. You ſhall ſee I have given him no encouragement independent of my duty. And when you have ſeen them, you will be better able to direct me how, on the condition I have offered, to break entirely with him.'

'I take you at your word, Clariſſa—Give me *his* letters; and the copies of *yours*.'

'I am ſure, Madam, you will keep the knowledge that I write, and what I write.'

'No conditions with your mother—Surely my prudence may be truſted to.'

I begged her pardon; and beſought her to take the key of the private drawer in my eſcritoire, where they lay, that ſhe herſelf might ſee that I had no reſerves to my mother.

She did; and took all his letters, and the copies of mine.—'Unconditioned with,' ſhe was pleaſed to ſay, 'they ſhall be yours again, unſeen by anybody elſe.'

I thanked her; and ſhe withdrew to read them; ſaying, She would return them, when ſhe had.

You, my dear, have ſeen all the letters that paſſed between Mr. Lovelace and me, till my laſt return from you. You have acknowledged, that he has nothing to boaſt of from them. Three others I have received ſince, by the private conveyance *I told you of*: the laſt I have not yet anſwered.

In theſe three, as in thoſe you have ſeen, after having beſought my favour, and in the moſt earneſt manner profeſſed the ardour of his paſſion for me; and ſet forth the indignities done him; the defiances my brother throws out againſt him in all companies; the menaces, and hoſtile appearance of my uncles wherever they go; and the methods they take to defame him; he declares, That neither his own honour, nor the honour of his family, (involved as that is in the undiſtinguiſhing reflections caſt upon him for an unhappy affair which he would have ſhunned, but could not) permit him to bear theſe confirmed indignities: that as my inclinations, if not favourable to *him*, cannot be, nor are, to ſuch a man as the newly-introduced Solmes, he is intereſted the more to reſent my brother's behaviour, who to every-body avows his rancour and malice; and glories in the probability he has, through the addreſs of this Solmes, of mortifying *me*, and avenging himſelf on *him*: that it is impoſſible he ſhould not think himſelf concerned to fruſtrate a meaſure ſo directly levelled at him, had he not a ſtill higher motive for hoping to fruſtrate it: that I muſt forgive him, if he enter into conference with Solmes upon it. He earneſtly inſiſts (upon what he has ſo often propoſed) that I will give him leave, in company with Lord M. to wait upon my uncles, and even upon my father—And he promiſes patience, if new provocations, abſolutely beneath a man to bear, be not given: which by the way I am far from being able to engage for.

In my anſwer, I abſolutely declare, as I tell him I have often done, That he is to expect no favour from me, againſt the approbation of my friends: that I am ſure their conſents for his viſiting any of them will never be obtained: that I will not be either ſo undutiful, or ſo indiſcreet, as to ſuffer my intereſts to be ſeparated from the intereſts of my family, for any man upon earth: that I do not think myſelf *obliged* to him for the forbearance I deſire one flaming ſpirit to have with others: that in this deſire I require nothing of him, but what prudence, juſtice, and the laws of his country, require: that if he has any expectations of favour from me, on that account, he deceives himſelf: that I have no inclination, as I have often told him, to change my condition: that I cannot allow myſelf to correſpond with him any longer in this clandeſtine manner: it is mean, low, undutiful, I tell him; and has a giddy appearance, which cannot be excuſed: that therefore he is not to expect that I *will* continue it.

To this, in his laſt, among other things, he replies, That if I am actually determined to break off all correſpondence with him, he muſt conclude, that it is with a view to become the wife of a man, whom no woman of honour and fortune can think tolerable. And in that caſe, I muſt excuſe him for ſaying, that he ſhall neither be able to bear the thoughts of loſing for ever a perſon in whom

whom all his present and all his future hopes are centred; nor support himself with patience under the insolent triumphs of my brother upon it. But that, nevertheless, he will not threaten either his own life, or that of any other man. He must take his resolutions as such a dreaded event shall impel him, at the time. If he shall know that it will have my consent, he must endeavour to resign to his destiny: but if he be brought about by compulsion, he shall not be able to answer for the consequence.

I will send you these letters for your perusal in a few days. I would inclose them; but that it is possible something may happen, which may make my mother require to re-peruse them.—When you see them, you will observe how he endeavours to hold me to this correspondence.

* *

In about an hour my mother returned. 'Take your letters, Clary: 'I have nothing,' she was pleased to say, 'to tax your discretion with, as to the 'wording of yours to him: you have 'even kept up a proper dignity, as well 'as observed all the rules of decorum; 'and you have resented, as you ought 'to resent, his menacing invectives. In 'a word, I see not that he can form the 'least expectations from what you have 'written, that you will encourage the 'passion he avows for you. But does 'he not avow his passion? Have you the 'least doubt about what must be the 'issue of this correspondence, if continued? And do you yourself think, 'when you know the avowed hatred of 'one side, and the declared defiances of 'the other, that this *can* be, that it '*ought to be*, a match?'

'By no means it can, Madam; you 'will be pleased to observe, that I have 'said as much to him. But now, Madam, that the whole correspondence 'is before you, I beg your commands 'what to do in a situation so very disagreeable.'

'One thing I will tell you, Clary—'But I charge you, as you would not 'have me question the generosity of 'your spirit, to take no advantage of 'it, either *mentally* or *verbally*; that I 'am so much pleased with the offer of 'your keys to me, made in so chearful 'and unreserved a manner, and in the 'prudence you have shewn in your letters, that were it practicable to bring 'every one, or your father only, into 'my opinion, I should readily leave all 'the rest to your discretion, reserving 'only to myself the direction or approbation of your future letters; and to 'see that you broke off the correspondence as soon as possible. But as it is 'not, and as I know your father would 'have no patience with you, should it 'be acknowledged that you correspond 'with Mr. Lovelace, or that you *have* 'corresponded with him since the time 'he prohibited you so to do; I forbid 'you to continue such a liberty—Yet, 'as the case is difficult, let me ask you, 'What you yourself can propose? Your 'heart, you *say*, is *free*: you own, that 'you cannot think, as matters are circumstanced, that a match with a man 'so obnoxious as he now is to us all, 'is proper to be thought of: what do 'you propose to do?—What, Clary, 'are your own thoughts of the matter?'

Without hesitation thus I answered—'What I humbly propose is this:—'That I will write to Mr. Lovelace, '(for I have not answered his last) that 'he has nothing to do between my father and me: that I neither *ask* his advice, nor *need* it; but that since he 'thinks he has some pretence for interfering, because of my brother's avowal of the interest of Mr. Solmes in displeasure to him, I will assure him '(without giving him any reason to 'impute the assurance to be in the least 'favourable to himself) that I never 'will be that man's. And if,' proceeded I, 'I may be permitted to give him this 'assurance; and Mr. Solmes, in consequence of it, be discouraged from 'prosecuting his address; let Mr. Lovelace be satisfied or dissatisfied, I will 'go no farther; nor write another line 'to him; nor ever see him more, if I 'can avoid it: and I shall have a good 'excuse for it, without bringing in any 'of my family.'

'Ah, my love!—But what shall we 'do about the *terms* Mr. Solmes offers? Those are the inducements with 'every-body. He has even given hopes 'to your brother that he will make exchanges of estates; or at least, that he 'will purchase the northern one; for 'you know it must be entirely consistent with the family-views, that we 'increase our interest in this country. 'Your brother, in short, has given in

'a plan that captivates us all: and a 'family so rich in all it's branches, 'and that has it's views to honour, must 'be pleased to see a very great proba- 'bility of taking rank one day among 'the principal in the kingdom.'

'And for the sake of these views, for 'the sake of this plan of my brother's, 'am I, Madam, to be given in mar- 'riage to a man I never can endure!— 'O my dear mamma, save me, save me, 'if you can, from this heavy evil!—I 'had rather be buried alive, indeed I 'had, than have that man!'

She chid me for my vehemence; but was so good as to tell me, That she would sound my uncle Harlowe, who was then below; and if he encouraged her, (or would engage to second her) she would venture to talk to my father herself; and I should hear further in the morning.

She went down to tea, and kindly undertook to excuse my attendance at supper.

But is it not a sad thing, I repeat, to be obliged to stand in opposition to the will of such a mother? 'Why,' as I often say to myself, 'was such a man 'as this Solmes fixed upon? The only 'man in the world, surely, that could 'offer so much, and deserve so little!'

Little, indeed, does he deserve!—Why, my dear, the man has the most indifferent of characters. Every mouth is opened against him for his sordid ways—*A fooliſh* man, to be so base-minded!—When the difference between the obtaining of a fame for generosity, and incurring the censure of being a miser, will not, prudently managed, cost fifty pounds a year.

What a name have you got, at a less expence? And what an opportunity had he of obtaining credit at a very small one, succeeding such a wretched creature as Sir Oliver, in fortunes so vast?—Yet has he so behaved, that the common phrase is applied to him, *That Sir* Oliver *will never be dead while Mr.* Solmes *lives*.

The world, as I have often thought, ill-natured as it is said to be, is generally more just in characters (speaking by what it *feels*) than is usually apprehended: and those who complain most of it's censoriousness, perhaps should look *inwardly* for the occasion oftener than they do.

My heart is a little at ease, on the hopes that my mother will be able to procure favour for me, and a deliverance from this man; and so I have leisure to moralize. But if I had *not*, I should not forbear to intermingle occasionally these sort of remarks, because you command me never to omit them when they occur to my mind: and not to be able to make them, even in a more affecting situation, when one sits down to write, would shew one's self more engaged to *self*, and to one's *own* concerns, than attentive to the wishes of a friend. If it be said that it is *natural* so to be, what makes that *nature*, on occasions where a friend may be obliged, or reminded of a piece of instruction, which (writing down) one's self may be the better for, but a *fault*; which it would set a person above nature to subdue?

LETTER XVIII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

SAT. MAR. 4.

WOULD you not have thought that something might have been obtained in my favour, from an offer so reasonable, from an expedient so proper, as I imagine, to put a tolerable end, as *from myself*, to a correspondence I hardly know how otherwise, with safety to some of my family, to get rid of?—But my brother's plan (which my mother spoke of, and of which I have in vain endeavoured to procure a copy, with a design to take it to pieces, and expose it, as I question not there is room to do) joined with my father's impatience of contradiction, are irresistible.

I have not been in bed all night; nor am I in the least drowsy. Expectation, and hope, and doubt, (an uneasy state!) kept me sufficiently wakeful. I stepped down at my usual time, that it might not be known I had not been in bed; and gave directions in the family-way.

About eight o'clock Shorey came to me from my mother with orders to attend her in her chamber.

My mother had been weeping, I saw by her eyes: but her aspect seemed to be less tender, and less affectionate, than the day before; and this, as soon as I entered

entered into her preſence, ſtruck me with an awe, which gave a great damp to my ſpirits.

'Sit down, Clary Harlowe; I ſhall 'talk to you by-and-by:' and continued looking into a drawer among laces and linen, in a way neither buſy nor unbuſy.

I believe it was a quarter of an hour before ſhe ſpoke to me, (my heart throbbing with the ſuſpenſe all the time;) and then ſhe aſked me coldly, What directions I had given for the day?

I ſhewed her the bill of fare for this day, and to-morrow, if, I ſaid, it pleaſed her to approve of it.

She made a ſmall alteration in it; but with an air ſo cold and ſo ſolemn, as added to my emotions.

'Mr. Harlowe talks of dining out 'to-day, I think, at my brother An-'tony's—'

'Mr. Harlowe!—Not my father!—'Have I not then a father!'—thought I?

'Sit down when I bid you.'

I ſat down.

'You look very ſullen, Clary.'

'I hope not, Madam.'

'If children would always be chil-'dren—parents——' And there ſhe ſtopped.

She then went to her toilette, and looked in the glaſs, and gave half a ſigh—The other half, as if ſhe would not have ſighed could ſhe have helped it, ſhe gently hemmed away.

'I don't love to ſee the girl look ſo 'ſullen.'

'Indeed, Madam, I am not ſullen.'—And I aroſe, and, turning from her, drew out my handkerchief; for the tears ran down my cheeks.

I thought, by the glaſs before me, I ſaw the *mother* in her ſoftened eye caſt towards me: but her words confirmed not the hoped-for tenderneſs.

'One of the moſt provoking things 'in the world is, to have people cry for 'what they can help!'

'I wiſh to Heaven I could, Madam!'—And I ſobbed again.

'Tears of penitence and ſobs of per-'verſeneſs are mighty well ſuited!—'You may go up to your chamber. I 'ſhall talk with you by-and-by.'

I curtſeyed with reverence.

'Mock me not with outward geſ-'tures of reſpect. The heart, Clary, is 'what I want.'

'Indeed, Madam, you have it. It is 'not ſo much mine as my mamma's.'

'Fine talking!—As ſomebody ſays, 'If words were to paſs for duty, Cla-'riſſa Harlowe would be the dutifulleſt 'child breathing.'

'God bleſs that ſomebody!—Be it 'whom it will, God bleſs that ſome-'body!'—And I curtſeyed, and, purſuant to her laſt command, was going.

She ſeemed ſtruck; but *was* to be angry with me.

So turning from me, ſhe ſpoke with quickneſs, 'Whither now, Clary Har-'lowe?'

'You commanded me, Madam, to 'go to my chamber.'

'I ſee you are very ready to go out 'of my preſence.—Is your compliance 'the effect of ſullenneſs, or obedience?—'You are very ready to leave me.'

I could hold no longer; but threw myſelf at her feet: 'O my deareſt mam-'ma! Let me know all I am to ſuffer: 'let me know what I am to be!—I *will* 'bear it, if I *can* bear it: but your diſ-'pleaſure I cannot bear!'

'Leave me, leave me, Clary Har-'lowe!—No kneeling!—Limbs ſo ſup-'ple; will ſo ſtubborn!—Riſe, I tell 'you.'

'I cannot riſe! I will diſobey my 'mamma, when ſhe bids me leave her 'without being reconciled to me! No 'ſullens, my mamma; no perverſeneſs; 'but, worſe than either; this is direct 'diſobedience!—Yet tear not yourſelf 'from me!' [wrapping my arms about her as I kneeled; ſhe ſtruggling to get from me; my face lifted up to hers, with eyes running over, that ſpoke not my heart if they were not all humility and reverence] 'You muſt not, muſt not, 'tear yourſelf from me!' [for ſtill the dear lady ſtruggled, and looked this way and that, in a ſweet diſorder, as if ſhe knew not what to do]—'I will ne-'ver riſe, nor leave you, nor let you 'go, till you ſay you are not angry 'with me.'

'O thou ever-moving child of my 'heart!' [folding her dear arms about my neck, as mine embraced her knees] 'Why was this taſk—But leave me!—'You have diſcompoſed me beyond 'expreſſion! Leave me, my dear!—I 'won't be angry with you—if I can 'help it—if you'll be good.'

I aroſe trembling, and hardly know-

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ing what I did, or how I ſtood or walked, withdrew to my chamber. My Hannah followed me as ſoon as ſhe heard me quit my mother's preſence, and with ſalts and ſpring-water, juſt kept me from fainting; and that was as much as ſhe could do. It was near two hours before I could ſo far recover myſelf as to take up my pen, to write to you how unhappily my hopes have ended.

My mother went down to breakfaſt. I was not fit to appear: but if I had been better, I ſuppoſe I ſhould not have been ſent for; ſince the permiſſion for my attending her down, was given by my father (when in my chamber) only on condition that ſhe found me *worthy of the name of daughter*. That, I doubt, I never ſhall be in *his* opinion, if he be not brought to change his mind as to this Mr. Solmes.

LETTER XIX.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

[IN ANSWER TO LETTER XV.]

SAT. MARCH 4. 12 O'CLOCK.

HANNAH has juſt now brought me from the uſual place your favour of yeſterday. The contents of it have made me very thoughtful; and you will have an anſwer in my graveſt ſtyle. —*I* to have that Mr. Solmes!—No, indeed!—I will ſooner—But I will write firſt to thoſe paſſages in your letter which are leſs concerning, that I may touch upon this part with more patience.

As to what you mention of my ſiſter's value for Mr. Lovelace, I am not very much ſurprized at it. She takes ſuch *officious* pains, and it is ſo much her ſubject, to have it thought that ſhe never *did*, and never *could* like him, that ſhe gives but too much room to ſuſpect that ſhe does. She never tells the ſtory of their parting, and of her refuſal of him, but her colour riſes, ſhe looks with diſdain upon me, and mingles anger with the airs ſhe gives herſelf—anger as well as airs, demonſtrating, that ſhe refuſed a man whom ſhe thought worth accepting: where elſe is the reaſon either for anger or boaſt?—Poor Bella! She is to be pitied—She cannot either like or diſlike with temper!—Would to Heaven ſhe had been miſtreſs of all her wiſhes! —Would to Heaven ſhe had!

As to what you ſay of my giving up to my father's controul the eſtate deviſed me, my motives at the time, as you acknowledge, were not blameable. Your advice to me on the ſubject was grounded, as I remember, on your good opinion of me; believing that I ſhould not make a bad uſe of the power willed me: neither you nor I, my dear, although you now aſſume the air of a diviner, [pardon me] could have believed *that* would have happened which has happened, as to my *father's* part particularly. You were indeed jealous of my brother's views *againſt me*; or rather of his predominant love of *himſelf*; but I did not think ſo hardly of my brother and ſiſter as you always did. You never loved them; and ill-will has eyes ever open to the faulty ſide; as good-will or love is blind even to real imperfections. I will briefly recollect my motives.

I found jealouſies and uneaſineſs riſing in every breaſt, where all before was unity and love: the honoured teſtator was reflected upon; a ſecond childhood was attributed to him; and I was cenſured, as having taken advantage of it. 'All young creatures,' thought I, 'more or leſs, covet independency; 'but thoſe who wiſh moſt for it, are 'ſeldom the fitteſt to be truſted either 'with the government of themſelves, 'or with power over others. This is 'certainly a very high and unuſual de'viſe to ſo young a creature. We 'ſhould not aim at *all* we have power 'to do. To take all that good-nature, 'or indulgence, or good opinion con'fers, ſhews a want of moderation, and 'a graſpingneſs that is unworthy of 'that indulgence; and are bad indica'tions of the *uſe* that may be made of 'the power bequeathed. It is true,' thought I, 'that I have formed agree'able ſchemes of making others as 'happy as myſelf, by the proper diſ'charge of the ſtewardſhip entruſted to 'me.' [*Are not all eſtates ſtewardſhips, my dear?*] 'But let me examine my'ſelf: is not vanity, or ſecret love of 'praiſe, a principal motive with me at 'the bottom?—Ought I not to ſuſpect 'my own heart? If I ſet up for my'ſelf, puffed up with every one's good 'opinion, may I not be *left* to myſelf? '—Every one's eyes are upon the con-

'duct,

'duct, upon the visits, upon the *visitors*, of a young creature of our sex, made independent: and are not such subjected, more than any others, to the attempts of enterprizers and fortune-seekers?—And then, left to myself, should I take a wrong step, though with ever so good an intention, how many should I have to triumph over me, how few to pity me!—The more of the one, and the fewer of the other, for having aimed at excelling.'

These were some of my reflections at the time: and I have no doubt, but that in the same situation I should do the very same thing; and that upon the maturest deliberation. Who can command or foresee events? To act up to our best judgments at the time, is all we can do. If I have erred, it is to worldly wisdom only that I have erred. If we suffer by an act of duty, or even by an act of generosity, is it not pleasurable on reflection, that the fault is in others, rather than in ourselves?—I had much rather have reason to think others unkind, than that they should have any to think me undutiful.

And so, my dear, I am sure had you.

And now for the *most* concerning part of your letter:

You think I must of necessity, as matters are circumstanced, be Solmes's wife. I will not be very rash, my dear, in protesting to the contrary: but I think it never can, and, what is still more, never *ought* to be!—My temper, I know, is depended upon. But I have heretofore said *, that I have something in me of my father's family, as well as of my mother's. And have I any encouragement to follow too implicitly the example which my mother sets of meekness, and resignedness to the wills of others? Is she not for ever obliged (as she was pleased to hint to me) to be of the *forbearing* side? In my mother's case, your observation I must own is verified, that those who will bear much, shall have much to bear †. What is it, as she says, that *she* has not sacrificed to peace?—Yet, has *she* by her sacrifices always found the peace she has deserved to find? Indeed no!—I am afraid the very contrary. And often and often have I had *reason* (on her account) to reflect, that we poor mortals, by our *over*-solicitude to preserve undisturbed the qualities we are *constitutionally* fond of, frequently lose the benefits we propose to ourselves from them: since the designing and encroaching (finding out what we most fear to forfeit) direct their batteries against these our weaker places, and, making an artillery (if I may so phrase it) of our *hopes* and *fears*, play it upon us at their pleasure.

Steadiness of mind, (a quality which the ill-bred and censorious deny to any of our sex) when we are absolutely convinced of being in the right, [otherwise it is not *steadiness*, but *obstinacy*] and when it is exerted in *material* cases, is a quality, which, as my good Dr. Lewen was wont to say, brings great credit to the possessor of it; at the same time that it usually, when *tried* and *known*, raises *such* above the attempts of the meanly machinating. He used therefore to inculcate upon me this steadiness, upon laudable convictions. And why may I not think that I am now put upon a proper exercise of it?

I said above, that I never can be, that I never *ought* to be, Mrs. Solmes.—I repeat that I *ought* not: for surely, my dear, I should not give up to my brother's ambition the happiness of my future life. Surely I ought not to be the instrument of depriving Mr. Solmes's relations of their natural rights and reversionary prospects, for the sake of further aggrandizing a family (although *that* I am of) which already lives in great affluence and splendor; and which might be as justly dissatisfied, were all that some of it aim at, to be obtained, that they were not princes, as now they are, that they are not peers. [For when ever was an ambitious mind, as you observe in the case of avarice ‡, satisfied by acquisition?] The less, surely, ought I to give into these grasping views of my brother, as I myself heartily despise the end aimed at; as I wish not either to change my state, or better my fortunes; and as I am fully persuaded, that happiness and riches are *two* things, and very seldom meet together.

Yet I dread, I exceedingly dread, the conflicts I know I must encounter with. It is possible, that I may be more unhappy from the due observation of the good doctor's general precept, than were I to yield the point; since what I call *steadiness* is deemed stubbornness, obstinacy, prepossession, by

* See Letter IX. p. 28. † Letter V, p. 19. ‡ See Letter X. p. 30.

those

those who have a right to put what interpretation they please upon my conduct.

So, my dear, were we perfect (which no one *can* be) we could not be happy in this life, unless those with whom we have to deal (those more especially who have any controul upon us) were governed by the same principles. But then does not the good doctor's conclusion recur—That we have nothing to do, but to chuse what is right; to be steady in the pursuit of it; and to leave the issue to Providence?

This, if you approve of my motives, (and if you don't, pray inform me) must be my aim in the present case.

But what then can I plead for a palliation to *myself* of my mother's sufferings on *my* account? Perhaps this consideration will carry some force with it—that *her* difficulties cannot last long; only till this great struggle shall be one way or other determined—Whereas *my* unhappiness, if I comply, will (from an aversion not to be overcome) be for life. To which let me add, that as I have reason to think that the present measures are not entered upon with her own natural liking, she will have the less pain, should they want the success which I think in my heart they ought to want.

I have run a great length in a very little time. The subject touched me to the quick. My reflections upon it will give you reason to expect from me a perhaps *too* steady a behaviour in a new conference, which, I find, I must have with my mother. My father and brother, as she was pleased to tell me, dine at my uncle Antony's; and that, as I have reason to believe, on purpose to give an opportunity for it.

Hannah informs me, that she heard my father high and angry with my mother, at taking leave of her: I suppose, for being too favourable to me; for Hannah heard her say, as in tears, 'Indeed, Mr. Harlowe, you greatly distress me!—The poor girl does not deserve—' Hannah heard no more, but that he said, he would break somebody's heart—Mine I suppose—not my mother's, I hope.

As only my sister dines with my mother, I thought I should have been commanded down: but she sent me up a plate from her table. I continued my writing. I could not touch a morsel. I ordered Hannah however to eat it, that I might not be thought sullen.

Before I conclude this, I will see whether any-thing offers from *either* of my private correspondences, that will make it proper to add to it; and will take a turn in the wood-yard and garden for that purpose.

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I AM stopped. Hannah shall deposit this. She was ordered by my mother (who asked where I was) to tell me, that she would come up and talk with me in my own closet.—She is coming! Adieu, my dear.

LETTER XX.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

SAT. AFTERNOON.

THE expected conference is over: but my difficulties are increased. This, as my mother was pleased to tell me, being the last *persuasory* effort that is to be attempted, I will be as particular in the account of it as my head and my heart will allow me to be.

'I have made,' said she, as she entered my room, 'a *short* as well as *early* 'dinner, on purpose to confer with 'you: and I do assure you, that it will 'be the last conference I shall either be 'permitted or *inclined* to hold with you 'on the subject, if you should prove 'as refractory as it is imagined you 'will prove by some, who are of opi'nion, that I have not the weight with 'you which my indulgence deserves. 'But I hope you will convince as well 'them as me of the contrary.

'Your father both dines and sups at 'your uncle's, on purpose to give us 'this opportunity; and according to 'the report I shall make on his return, '(which I have promised shall be a very 'faithful one) he will take his mea'sures with you.'

I was offering to speak—'Hear, Cla'rissa, what I have to tell you,' said she, 'before you speak, unless what 'you have to say will signify to me 'your compliance—Say—*Will* it?—If 'it *will*, you may speak.'

I was silent.

She looked with concern and anger upon me—'No compliance, I find!—'Such a dutiful young creature hither-

'to!

'to!—Will you not, *can* you not, speak 'as I would have you speak?—Then,' [rejecting me as it were with her hand] 'continue silent.—*I*, no more than 'your *father*, will bear your *avowed* 'contradiction.'

She paused with a look of expectation, as if she waited for my consenting answer.

I was still silent; looking down; the tears in my eyes.

'O thou determined girl!—But say—'Speak out—Are you resolved to stand 'in opposition to us all, in a point our 'hearts are set upon?'

'May I, Madam, be permitted to 'expostulate?'

'To what purpose expostulate with '*me*, Clarissa? Your *father* is determined. Have I not told you there 'is no receding; that the honour as 'well as the interest of the family is 'concerned? Be ingenuous; you *used* 'to be so, even occasionally against 'yourself:—who at the long-run *must* 'submit—*all* of us to *you*; or *you* to *all* 'of us?—If you intend to yield at *last* 'if you find you cannot conquer, yield '*now*, and with a grace—for yield you 'must, or be none of our child.'

I wept. I knew not what to say; or rather how to express what I had to say.

'Take notice, that there are flaws 'in your grandfather's will: not a 'shilling of that estate will be yours, 'if you do not yield. Your grandfather left it to you, as a reward of 'your duty to *him* and to *us*—You will '*justly* forfeit it, if—'

'Permit me, good Madam, to say, 'that if it were *unjustly* bequeathed me, 'I ought not to wish to have it. But I 'hope Mr. Solmes will be apprized of 'these flaws.'

'This is very pertly said, Clarissa: 'but reflect, that the forfeiture of that 'estate through your opposition, will 'be attended with the total loss of your 'father's favour: and then how destitute must you be; how unable to support yourself; and how many benevolent designs and good actions must 'you give up!'

'I must accommodate myself, Madam, in the latter case, to my circumstances: *much* only is *required* 'where *much* is *given*. It becomes me 'to be thankful for what I have had. 'I have reason to bless you, Madam, 'and my good Mrs. Norton, for bringing me up to be satisfied with little; 'but much less, I will venture to say, 'than my father's indulgence annually 'confers upon me'—And then I thought of the old Roman and his Lentils.

'What perverseness!' said my mother.—'But if you depend upon the 'favour of either or both of your uncles; 'vain will be that dependence: *they* 'will give you up, I do assure you, if 'your father does, and absolutely renounce you.'

'I am sorry, Madam, that I have 'had so little merit as to have made no 'deeper impressions of favour for me 'in their hearts: but I will love and 'honour them as long as I live.'

'All this, Clarissa, makes your prepossession in a certain man's favour 'the more evident. Indeed your brother and sister cannot go any-whither, 'but they hear of these prepossessions.'

'It is a great grief to me, Madam, 'to be made the subject of the publick 'talk: but I hope you will have the 'goodness to excuse me for observing, 'that the authors of my disgrace within-doors, the talkers of my prepossession without, and the reporters 'of it from abroad, are originally the 'same persons.'

She severely chid me for this.

I received her rebukes in silence.

'You are sullen, Clarissa: I see you 'are *sullen*.'—And she walked about the room in anger. Then turning to me—'You can *bear* the imputation of 'sullenness, I see!—You have no concern to clear yourself of it. I was 'afraid of telling you all I was enjoined to tell you, in case you were 'to be unpersuadable: but I find that 'I had a greater opinion of your delicacy, of your gentleness, than I 'needed to have—It cannot discompose so steady, so inflexible a young 'creature, to be told, as I now tell 'you, that the settlements are actually 'drawn; and that you will be called 'down in a very few days to hear them 'read, and to sign them: for it is impossible, if your heart be free, that 'you can make the least objection 'to them; except it will be an objection with you, that they are so 'much in your favour, and in the favour of all our family.'

I was speechless, absolutely speech-

leſs. Although my heart was ready to burſt, yet could I neither weep nor ſpeak.

'I am ſorry,' ſaid ſhe, 'for your averſeneſs to this match:' [*Match* ſhe was pleaſed to call it!] 'but there is no help. The honour and intereſt of the family, as your aunt has told you, and as I have told you, are concerned; and you muſt comply.'

I was ſtill ſpeechleſs.

She folded the *warm ſtatue*, as ſhe was pleaſed to call me, in her arms; and entreated me, for Heaven's ſake, and for her ſake, to comply.

Speech and tears were lent me at the ſame time.—'You have given me life, Madam,' ſaid I, claſping my uplifted hands together, and falling on one knee; 'a happy one, till now, has *your* goodneſs, and my *papa's*, made it! O do not, do not, make all the remainder of it miſerable!'

'Your father,' replied ſhe, 'is reſolved not to ſee you, till he ſees you as obedient a child as you uſed to be. You have never been put to a teſt till now, that deſerved to be called a teſt. This *is*, this *muſt* be, my laſt effort with you. Give me hope, my dear child: my peace is concerned; I will compound with you but for *hope*. And yet your father will not be ſatisfied without an implicit, and even a chearful obedience—Give me but hope, my child!'

'To give you hope, my deareſt, my moſt indulgent mamma, is to give you every-thing. Can I be honeſt, if I give a hope that I cannot confirm?'

She was very angry. She again called me perverſe: ſhe upbraided me with regarding only my own prepoſſeſſions, and reſpecting not either her peace of mind, or my own duty.—'It is a grating thing,' ſaid ſhe, 'for the parents of a child, who delighted in her in all the time of her helpleſs infancy, and throughout every ſtage of her childhood; and in every part of her education to womanhood, becauſe of the promiſes ſhe gave of proving the moſt grateful and dutiful of children; to find, juſt when the time arrived which ſhould crown their wiſhes, that child ſtand in the way of her own happineſs, and her parents comfort, and, refuſing an excellent offer, and noble ſettlements, give ſuſpicions to her anxious friends, that ſhe would become the property of a vile rake and libertine, who (be the occaſion what it will) defies her family, and has actually embrued his hands in her brother's blood.

'I have had a very hard time of it,' ſaid ſhe, 'between your father and you; for, ſeeing your diſlike, I have more than once pleaded for you: but all to no purpoſe. I am only treated as a too fond mother, who, from motives of a blameable indulgence, encourage a child to ſtand in oppoſition to a father's will. I am charged with dividing the family into two parts; I and my youngeſt daughter ſtanding againſt my huſband, his two brothers, my ſon, my eldeſt daughter, and my ſiſter Hervey. I have been told, that I muſt be convinced of the fitneſs as well as advantage to the whole (your brother and Mr. Lovelace out of the queſtion) of carrying the contract with Mr. Solmes, on which ſo *many* contracts depend, into execution.

'Your father's heart, I tell you once more, is in it: he has declared, that he had rather have no daughter in you, than one he cannot diſpoſe of for your own good; eſpecially as you have owned, that *your heart is free*; and as the general good of his whole family is to be promoted by your obedience. He has pleaded, poor man! that his frequent gouty paroxyſms (every fit more threatening than the former) give him no extraordinary proſpects, either of worldly happineſs, or of long days: and he hopes, that you, who have been ſuppoſed to have contributed to the lengthening of your *grandfather's* life, will not, by your diſobedience, ſhorten your *father's*.'

This was a moſt affecting plea, my dear. I wept in ſilence upon it. And my mother proceeded. 'What therefore can be *his* motives, Clary Harlowe, in the earneſt deſire he has to ſee this treaty perfected, but the welfare and aggrandizement of his family; which already having fortunes to become the higheſt condition, cannot but aſpire to greater diſtinctions? However ſlight ſuch views as theſe may appear to you, Clary, you know, that they are not ſlight ones to any other of the family:

'family: and your father will be his 'own judge of what is and what is not 'likely to promote the good of his 'children. Your abstractedness, child, '(*affectation* of abstractedness some 'call it) favours, let me tell you, of 'greater particularity, than what we 'aim to carry. Modesty and humility 'therefore will oblige you rather to 'mistrust yourself of *peculiarity*, than 'censure views which all the world pur-'sues, as opportunity offers.'

I was still silent; and she proceeded—'It is owing to the good opinion, Cla-'ry, which your father has of you, 'and of your prudence, duty, and 'gratitude, that he engaged for your 'compliance, in your absence; (before 'you returned from Miss Howe) and 'that he built and finished contracts 'upon it, which cannot be made void, 'or cancelled.'

'But why, then,' thought I, 'did 'they receive me, on my return from 'Miss Howe, with so much intimi-'dating solemnity?'—To be sure, my dear, this argument, as well as the rest, was obtruded upon my mother.

She went on, 'Your father has de-'clared, that your unexpected opposi-'tion,' [*Unexpected* she was pleased to call it] 'and Mr. Lovelace's continued 'menaces and insults, more and more 'convince him, that a short day is ne-'cessary in order to put an end to all 'that man's hopes, and to his own ap-'prehensions resulting from the disobe-'dience of a child so favoured. He 'has therefore actually ordered pat-'terns of the richest silks to be sent for 'from London.'

I started—I was out of breath—I gasped, at this frightful precipitance—I was going to open with warmth against it. I knew whose the *happy* expedient must be: female minds, I once heard my brother say, that could but be brought to *balance* on the change of their state, might easily be *determined* by the glare and splendor of the nuptial preparations, and the pride of becoming the mistress of a family.—But she was pleased to hurry on, that I might not have time to express my disgusts at such a communication—to this effect.

'Your father therefore, my Clary, 'cannot, either for your sake, or his 'own, labour under a suspense so af-'fecting to his repose. He has even 'thought fit to acquaint me, on my 'pleading for you, that it becomes me, 'as I value my own peace,' [*How harsh to such a wife!*] 'and as I wish, that 'he do not suspect that I secretly fa-'vour the address of a vile rake, (a 'character which all the sex, he is 'pleased to say, virtuous and vicious, 'are but too fond of!) to exert my au-'thority over you: and that this I may 'the less scrupulously do, as you have 'owned,' [The old string!] '*that your* '*heart is free.*'

Unworthy reflection in my mother's case, surely; this of our sex's valuing a libertine; since she made choice of my father in preference to several suitors of equal fortune, because they were of inferior reputation for morals!

'Your father,' added she, 'at his go-'ing out, told me what he expected 'from me, in case I found that I had 'not the requisite influence upon you—'It was this—That I should directly 'separate myself from you, and leave 'you singly to take the consequence of 'your double disobedience—I there-'fore entreat you, my dear Clarissa,' concluded she, and that in the most earnest and condescending manner, 'to 'signify to your father, on his return, 'your ready obedience; and this as 'well for my sake as for your own.'

Affected by my mother's goodness to me, and by that part of her argument which related to her own peace, and to the suspicions they had of her secretly inclining to prefer the man so hated by *them*, to the man so much *my* aversion, I could not but wish it were possible for me to obey. I therefore paused, hesitated, considered, and was silent for some time. I could see, that my mother hoped that the result of this hesitation would be favourable to her arguments. But then recollecting, that all was owing to the instigations of a brother and sister, wholly actuated by selfish and envious views; that I had not deserved the treatment I had of late met with; that my disgrace was *already* become the publick talk; that the man was Mr. Solmes; and that my aversion to him was too generally known, to make my compliance either creditable to myself or to them: that it would give my brother and sister a triumph over me, and over Mr. Lovelace, which they would not fail to glory in; and which, although it concerned me but

little to regard on *his* account, yet might be attended with fatal mischiefs —And then Mr. Solmes's disagreeable person; his still more disagreeable manners; his low understanding—Understanding! the glory of a man, so little to be dispensed with in the head and director of a family, in order to preserve to him that respect which a good wife (and that for the justification of her own choice) should pay him herself, and wish every-body to pay him—And as Mr. Solmes's *inferiority* in this respectable faculty of the human mind [I must be allowed to say this to you, and no great self-assumption neither] would proclaim to all future, as well as to all present observers, what must have been my mean inducement—All these reflections crouding upon my remembrance; 'I would, Madam,' said I, folding my hands, with an earnestness in which my whole heart was engaged, 'bear the cruellest tortures, bear 'loss of limb, and even of life, to give '*you* peace. But this man, every mo-'ment I would, at your command, 'think of him with favour, is the more 'my aversion. You cannot, indeed 'you cannot, think, how my whole soul 'resists him!—And to talk of contracts 'concluded upon; of patterns; of a 'short day!—Save me, save me, O my 'dearest mamma, save your child, from 'this heavy, from this insupportable 'evil!'

Never was there a countenance that expressed so significantly, as my mother's did, an anguish, which she struggled to hide, under an anger she was compelled to assume—till the latter overcoming the former, she turned from me with an uplifted eye; and stamping —'*Strange perverseness!*' were the only words I heard of a sentence that she angrily pronounced; and was going. I then, half-frantickly I believe, laid hold of her gown—'Have patience with me, 'dearest Madam!' said I.—'Do not '*you* renounce me totally!—If you '*must* separate yourself from your 'child, let it not be with *absolute* re-'probation on *your own* part!—My 'uncles may be hard-hearted—my fa-'ther may be immoveable—I may suf-'fer from my brother's ambition, and 'from my sister's envy!—But let me 'not lose my mamma's love; at least, 'her pity.'

She turned to me with benigner rays —'You *have* my *love!* You *have* my 'pity! But, O my dearest girl—I have 'not *yours*.'

'Indeed, indeed, Madam, you have: 'and all my reverence, all my grati-'tude, you have!—But in this *one* 'point—Cannot I be this *once* obliged? '—Will no *expedient* be accepted? 'Have I not made a very fair proposal 'as to Mr. Lovelace?'

'I wish, for both our sakes, my dear 'unpersuadable girl, that the decision 'of this point lay with me. But why, 'when you know it does not, why 'should you thus perplex and urge 'me?—To renounce Mr. Lovelace is 'now but *half* what is aimed at. Nor 'will any-body else believe you in 'earnest in the offer, if *I* would. 'While you remain single, Mr. Love-'lace will have hopes—and you, in 'the opinion of others, inclinations.'

'Permit me, dearest Madam, to say, 'that *your* goodness to me, *your* pa-'tience, *your* peace, weigh more with 'me, than all the rest put together: for 'although I am to be treated by my 'brother, and, through his instigations, 'by my father, as a slave in this point, 'and not as a daughter, yet my mind is 'not that of a slave. You have not 'brought me up to be mean.'

'So, Clary! you are already at defi-'ance with your father! I have had 'too much cause before to *apprehend* 'as much—What will this come to? '—*I*,' and then my dear mamma sigh-ed—'*I* am forced to put up with many 'humours.'

'That you *are*, my ever-honoured 'mamma, is my grief. And can it be 'thought, that this very consideration, 'and the apprehension of what may re-'sult from a much *worse*-tempered 'man, (a man, who has not half the 'sense of my father) has not made an 'impression upon me, to the disadvan-'tage of the married life? Yet it is 'something of an alleviation, if one 'must bear *undue* controul, to bear it 'from a man of sense. My father, I 'have heard you say, Madam, was for 'years a very good-humoured gentle-'man—Unobjectible in person and 'manners—But the man proposed to 'me—'

'Forbear reflecting upon your fa-'ther:' [Did I, my dear, in what I have repeated, and I think they are the very words, reflect upon my father?]

'It

'it is not poſſible, I muſt ſay again, and again, were all men *equally* indifferent to you, that you ſhould be thus ſturdy in your will. I am tired out with your obſtinacy—The moſt *unperſuadeable* girl—You forget, that I muſt ſeparate myſelf from you, if you will not comply. You do not remember that your father will take you up, where I leave you. Once more, however, I will put it to you —Are you determined to brave your father's diſpleaſure?—Are you determined to defy your uncles?—Do you chuſe to break with us all, rather than encourage Mr. Solmes?—Rather than give me hope?'

'Dreadful alternative—But is not my ſincerity, is not the integrity of my heart, concerned in my anſwer? May not my everlaſting happineſs be the ſacrifice? Will not the leaſt ſhadow of the *hope* you juſt now demanded from me, be driven into abſolute and ſudden *certainty?* Is it not ſought to enſnare, to entangle me in my own deſire of obeying, if I could give anſwers that might be conſtrued into *hope?*—Forgive me, Madam: bear with your child's boldneſs in ſuch a cauſe as *this!*—Settlements drawn!—Patterns ſent for!—An early day!—Dear, dear Madam, how can I give hope, and not intend to be this man's?'

'Ah, girl, never ſay your *heart is free!* You deceive yourſelf if you think it is.'

'Thus to be driven' [and I wrung my hands through impatience] 'by the inſtigations of a deſigning, an ambitious brother, and by a ſiſter, that—'

'How often, Clary, muſt I forbid your unſiſterly reflections?—Does not your father, do not your uncles, does not every body, patronize Mr. Solmes? And let me tell you, ungrateful girl, and unmoveable as ungrateful, let me *repeatedly* tell you, that it is evident to me, that nothing but a love unworthy of your prudence can make a creature late ſo dutiful, now ſo ſturdy. You may gueſs what your father's firſt queſtion on his return will be. He *muſt* know, that I can do nothing with you. I have done my part. Seek *me*, if your mind change before he comes back: you have yet a little more time, as he ſtays ſupper. I will no more ſeek *you*, nor *to* you.'—And away ſhe flung.

What could I do but weep?

I am extremely affected on my mother's account—more, I muſt needs ſay, than on my own. And indeed all things conſidered; and eſpecially, that the meaſure ſhe is engaged in, is (as I dare ſay it is) againſt her own judgment; ſhe *deſerves* more compaſſion than myſelf.—Excellent woman! What pity, that meekneſs and condeſcenſion ſhould not be attended with the due rewards of thoſe charming graces!—Yet had ſhe not let violent ſpirits (as I have elſewhere obſerved with no ſmall regret) find their power over hers, it could not have been thus.

But here, run away with by my pen, I ſuffer my mother to be angry with me on her own account. She hinted to me, indeed, that I muſt ſeek *her*, if my mind *changed*; which is a condition that amounts to a prohibition of attending her: but, as ſhe left me in diſpleaſure, will it not have a very obſtinate appearance, and look like a kind of renunciation of her mediation in my favour, if I go not down before my father returns, to ſupplicate her pity, and her kind report to him?

I will attend her. I had rather all the world ſhould be angry with me than my mamma!

Mean time, to clear my hands from papers of ſuch a nature, Hannah ſhall depoſit this. If two or three letters reach you together, they will but expreſs, from one period to another, the anxieties and difficulties which the mind of your unhappy but ever affectionate friend labours under.

CL. H.

LETTER XXI.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

SAT. NIGHT.

I Have been down. I *am* to be unlucky in all I do, I think, be my intentions ever ſo good. I have made matters worſe inſtead of better: as I ſhall now tell you.

I found my mother and ſiſter together

ther in my ſiſter's parlour. My mother, I fear, by the glow in her fine face, (and as the browner, ſullener glow in my ſiſter's confirmed) had been expreſſing herſelf with warmth, againſt her *unhappier* child: perhaps giving ſuch an account of what had paſſed, as ſhould clear herſelf, and convince Bella, and through *her*, my brother and uncles, of the ſincere pains ſhe had taken with me.

I entered like a dejected criminal; and beſought the favour of a private audience. My mother's return, both looks and words, gave but too much reaſon for my above ſurmize.

'You have,' ſaid ſhe, [looking at me with a ſternneſs that never ſits well on her ſweet features] 'rather a 'requeſting than a *conceding* countenance, Clariſſa Harlowe: if I am 'miſtaken, tell me ſo; and I will with-'draw with you wherever you will.— 'Yet, whether ſo or not, you may ſay 'what you have to ſay before your 'ſiſter.'

My mother, I thought, might have withdrawn with me, as ſhe knows that I have not a friend in my ſiſter.

'I come down, Madam,' ſaid I, 'to 'beg of you to forgive me for any-thing 'you may have taken amiſs in what 'paſſed above reſpecting your honoured 'ſelf; and that you will be pleaſed to 'uſe your endeavours to ſoften my pa-'pa's diſpleaſure againſt me on his re-'turn.'

Such aggravating looks; ſuch lifting up of hands and eyes; ſuch a furrowed forehead, in my ſiſter!

My mother was angry enough without all that; and aſked me to what purpoſe I came down, if I were ſtill ſo untractable.

She had hardly ſpoken the words, when Shorey came in to tell her that Mr. Solmes was in the hall, and deſired admittance.

Ugly creature! What, at the cloſe of day, quite dark, brought him hither?— But, on ſecond thoughts, I believe it was contrived that he ſhould be here at ſupper, to know the reſult of the conference between my mother and me, and that my father, on his return, might find us together.

I was hurrying away, but my mother commanded me (ſince I had come down only, as ſhe ſaid, to mock her) not to ſtir; and at the ſame time ſee if I could behave ſo to Mr. Solmes, as might encourage her to make the favourable report to my father which I had beſought her to make.

My ſiſter triumphed. I was vexed to be ſo caught, and to have ſuch an angry and cutting rebuke given me, with an aſpect more like the taunting ſiſter than the indulgent mother, if I may preſume to ſay ſo: for ſhe herſelf ſeemed to enjoy the ſurprize upon me.

The man ſtalked in. His uſual walk is by pauſes, as if (from the ſame vacuity of thought which made Dryden's Clown whiſtle) he was telling his ſteps: and firſt paid his clumſy reſpects to my mother; then to my ſiſter; next to me, as if I were already his wife, and therefore to be laſt in his notice; and ſitting down by me, told us in general what weather it was. Very cold he made it; but I was warm enough. Then addreſſing himſelf to me; 'And how do 'you find it, Miſs?' was his queſtion; and would have taken my hand.

I withdrew it, I believe, with diſdain enough. My mother frowned. My ſiſter bit her lip.

I could not contain myſelf: I was never ſo bold in my life; for I went on with my plea, as if Mr. Solmes had not been there.

My mother coloured, and looked at him, at my ſiſter, and at me. My ſiſter's eyes were opener and bigger than ever I ſaw them before.

The man underſtood me. He hemmed, and removed from one chair to another.

I went on, ſupplicating for my mother's favourable report: 'Nothing but 'invincible diſlike,' ſaid I—

'What would the girl be at?' interrupted my mother. 'Why, Clary! Is 'this a ſubject!—Is this!—Is this!— 'Is this a time—' And again ſhe looked upon Mr. Solmes.

I am ſorry, on reflection, that I put my mamma into ſo much confuſion—To be ſure it was very ſaucy in me.

'I beg pardon, Madam,' ſaid I. 'But 'my papa will ſoon return. And ſince I 'am not permitted to withdraw, it is not 'neceſſary, I humbly preſume, that Mr. 'Solmes's preſence ſhould deprive me 'of this opportunity to implore your 'favourable report; and at the ſame 'time, if he ſtill viſit on my account,'

[looking

[looking at him] 'to convince him, 'that it cannot poſſibly be to any pur- 'poſe.'

'Is the girl mad?' ſaid my mother, interrupting me.

My ſiſter, with the affectation of a whiſper to my mother—'This is—This 'is *ſpite*, Madam,' [very *ſpitefully* ſhe ſpoke the word] 'becauſe you com- 'manded her to ſtay.'

I only looked at her, and turning to my mother, 'Permit me, Madam,' ſaid I, 'to repeat my requeſt. I have no 'brother, no ſiſter!—If I loſe my mam- 'ma's favour, I am loſt for ever!'

Mr. Solmes removed to his firſt ſeat, and fell to gnawing the head of his hazel; a carved head, almoſt as ugly as his own—I did not think the man was ſo *ſenſible*.

My ſiſter roſe, with a face all over ſcarlet; and ſtepping to the table, where lay a fan, ſhe took it up; and, although Mr. Solmes had obſerved that the wea- ther was cold, fanned herſelf very vio- lently.

My mother came to me, and angrily taking my hand, led me out of that par- lour into my own; which, you know, is next to it.—'Is not this behaviour 'very bold, very provoking, think you, 'Clary?'

'I beg your pardon, Madam, if it 'has that appearance to you. But, in- 'deed, my dear mamma, there ſeem to 'be ſnares laying for me. Too well 'I know my brother's drift. With a 'good word he ſhall have my conſent 'for all he wiſhes to worm me out of— 'Neither he, nor my ſiſter, ſhall need 'to take half this pains—'

My mother was about to leave me in high diſpleaſure.

I beſought her to ſtay: 'One favour, 'but one favour, deareſt Madam,' ſaid I, 'give me leave to beg of you—'

'What would the girl?'

'I ſee how every-thing is working 'about—I never, never can think of Mr. 'Solmes. My papa will be in tumults 'when he is told that I cannot. They 'will judge of the tenderneſs of your 'heart to a poor child who ſeems de- 'voted by every-one elſe, from the wil- 'lingneſs you have already ſhewn to 'hearken to my prayers. There will 'be endeavours uſed to confine me, and 'keep me out of your preſence, and 'out of the preſence of every one who 'uſed to love me.' [*This, my dear Miſs Howe, is threatened.*] 'If this be ef- 'fected; if it be put out of my power 'to plead my own cauſe, and to appeal 'to you, and to my uncle Harlowe, of 'whom only I have hope; then will 'every ear be opened againſt me, and 'every tale encouraged.—It is, there- 'fore, my humble requeſt, That, added 'to the diſgraceful prohibitions I now 'ſuffer under, you will not, if you can 'help it, give way to my being denied '*your* ear.'

'Your liſtening Hannah has given 'you this intelligence, as ſhe does many 'others.'

'My Hannah, Madam, liſtens not— 'My Hannah—'

'No more in Hannah's behalf— 'Hannah is known to make miſchief— 'Hannah is known—But no more of 'that bold intermeddler—It is true, 'your father threatened to confine you 'to your chamber, if you complied not, 'in order the more aſſuredly to deprive 'you of the opportunity of correſpond- 'ing with thoſe who harden your heart 'againſt his will. He bid me tell you 'ſo, when he went out, if I found you 'refractory. But I was loth to deliver 'ſo harſh a declaration; being ſtill in 'hope that you would come down to 'us in a compliant temper. Hannah 'has over-heard this, I ſuppoſe; and has 'told you of it; as alſo, that he declared 'he would break your heart, rather 'than you ſhould break his. And I now 'aſſure you, that you will be confined, 'and prohibited making teazing ap- 'peals to any of us: and we ſhall ſee 'who is to ſubmit, you to us, or every- 'body to you.'

Again I offered to clear Hannah, and to lay the latter part of the intelligence to my ſiſter's echo, Betty Barnes, who had boaſted of it to another ſervant: but I was again bid to be ſilent on that head. I ſhould ſoon find, my mother was pleaſed to ſay, that *others* could be as determined as *I* was obſtinate: and, once for all, would add, that ſince ſhe ſaw that I built upon her indulgence, and was indifferent about involving her in contentions with my father, and his brothers, and with her other children, ſhe would now aſſure me, that ſhe was as much determined *againſt* Mr. Love- lace, and *for* Mr. Solmes and the family- ſchemes, as any-body; and would not refuſe

refuse her consent to any measures that should be thought necessary to reduce a stubborn child to her duty.

I was ready to sink. She was so good as to lend me her arm to support me.

'And this,' said I, 'is all I have to 'hope for from my mamma?'

'It is. But, Clary, this one further 'opportunity I give you—Go in again 'to Mr. Solmes, and behave discreetly 'to him; and let your father find you 'together, upon *civil* terms at least.'

My feet moved [of *themselves*, I think] farther from the parlour where he was, and towards the stairs; and there I stopped and paused.

'If,' proceeded she, 'you are deter-'mined to stand in defiance of us all—'then, indeed, may you go up to your 'chamber, (as you are ready to do)—'And God help you!'

'God help me, indeed! for I cannot 'give hope of what I cannot intend—'But let me have your prayers, my dear 'mamma!—Those shall have mine, 'who have brought me into all this 'distress.'

I was moving to go up—

'And *will* you go up, Clary?'

I turned my face to her; my officious tears would needs plead for me; I could not just then speak; and stood still.

'Good girl, distress me not thus! 'Dear, good girl, do not thus distress 'me!' holding out her hand; but standing still likewise.

'What *can* I do, Madam?—What '*can* I do?'

'Go in again, my child—Go in 'again, my *dear* child!' repeated she; 'and let your father find you together.'

'What, Madam, to give *him* hope? 'To give hope to Mr. Solmes?'

'Obstinate, perverse, undutiful Cla-'rissa!' with a rejecting hand, and angry aspect; 'then take your own way, 'and go up!—But stir not down again, 'I charge you, without leave, or till 'your father's pleasure be known con-'cerning you.'

She flung from me with high indignation: and I went up with a very heavy heart; and feet as slow as my heart was heavy.

* *

My father is come home, and my brother with him. Late as it is, they are all shut up together. Not a door opens; not a soul stirs. Hannah, as she moves up and down, is shunned as a person infected.

* *

The angry assembly is broken up. My two uncles, and my aunt Hervey are sent for, it seems, to be here in the morning to breakfast. I shall then, I suppose, know my doom. It is past eleven, and I am ordered not to go to bed.

TWELVE O'CLOCK.

This moment the keys of everything are taken from me. It was proposed to send for me down: but my father said, he could not bear to look upon me.—Strange alteration in a few weeks!—Shorey was the messenger. The tears stood in her eyes when she delivered her message.

You, my dear, are happy—May you always be so—And then I can never be wholly miserable. Adieu, my beloved friend!

Cl. Harlowe.

LETTER XXII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

SUNDAY MORNING, MARCH 5.

Hannah has just brought me, from the private place in the garden-wall, a letter from Mr. Lovelace, deposited last night, signed also by Lord M.

He tells me in it, That Mr. Solmes makes it his boast, that he is to be married in a few days to one of the shyest women in England: that my brother explains his meaning; this shy creature, he says, is me; and he assures every one, that his younger sister is very soon to be Mr. Solmes's wife. He tells me of the patterns bespoken which my mother mentioned to me.

Not one thing escapes him that is done or said in this house.

My sister, he says, reports the same things; and that with such particular aggravations of insult upon *him*, that he cannot but be extremely piqued, as well at the manner, as from the occasion; and expresses himself with great violence upon it.

He knows not, he says, what my relations inducements can be, to prefer such

ſuch a man as Solmes to him. If advantageous ſettlements be the motive, Solmes ſhall not offer what he will refuſe to comply with.

As to his eſtate, and family; the firſt cannot be excepted againſt: and for the ſecond, he will not diſgrace himſelf by a compariſon ſo odious. He appeals to Lord M. for the regularity of his life and manners ever ſince he has made his addreſſes to me, or had hope of my favour.

I ſuppoſe, he would have his lordſhip's ſigning to this letter to be taken as a voucher for him.

He deſires my leave (in company with my lord, in a pacifick manner) to attend my father and uncles, in order to make propoſals that *muſt* be accepted, if they will but ſee him, and hear what they are: and tells me that he will ſubmit to any meaſures that I ſhall preſcribe, in order to bring about a reconciliation.

He preſumes to be very earneſt with me, to give him a private meeting ſome night, in my father's garden, attended by whom I pleaſe.

Really, my dear, were you to ſee his letter, you would think I had given him great encouragement, and that I am in direct treaty with him; or that he is ſure that my friends will drive me into a foreign protection; for he has the boldneſs to offer, in my lord's name, an aſylum to me, ſhould I be tyrannically treated in Solmes's behalf.

I ſuppoſe it is the way of this ſex to endeavour to entangle the thoughtleſs of ours by bold ſuppoſals and offers, in hopes that we ſhall be too complaiſant or baſhful to quarrel with them; and, if not checked, to reckon upon our ſilence, as aſſents voluntarily given, or conceſſions made in their favour.

There are other particulars in this letter which I ought to mention to you: but I will take an opportunity to ſend you the letter itſelf, or a copy of it.

For my own part I am very uneaſy to think how I have been *drawn* on one hand, and *driven* on the other, into a clandeſtine, in ſhort, into a mere lover-like correſpondence, which my heart condemns.

It is eaſy to ſee, if I do not break it off, that Mr. Lovelace's advantages, by reaſon of my unhappy ſituation, will every day increaſe, and I ſhall be more and more entangled. Yet if I do put an end to it, without making it a condition of being freed from Mr. Solmes's addreſs—May I, my dear; is it *beſt* to continue it a little longer, in hopes to extricate myſelf out of the other difficulty, by giving up all thoughts of Mr. Lovelace?—*Whoſe* advice can I now aſk but yours?

All my relations are met. They are at breakfaſt together. Mr. Solmes is expected. I am exceſſively uneaſy. I muſt lay down my pen.

* *

THEY are all going to church together. Grievouſly diſordered they appear to be, as Hannah tells me. She believes ſomething is reſolved upon.

SUNDAY NOON.

WHAT a cruel thing is ſuſpenſe!—I will aſk leave to go to church this afternoon. I expect to be denied: but if I do not aſk, they may alledge, that my not going is owing to myſelf.

* *

I DESIRED to ſpeak with Shorey. Shorey came. I directed her to carry to my mother my requeſt for permiſſion to go to church this afternoon. What think you was the return? 'Tell her, 'that ſhe muſt direct herſelf to her bro-'ther for any favour ſhe has to aſk.'—So, my dear, I am to be delivered up to my brother!

I was reſolved, however, to aſk of *him* this favour. Accordingly, when they ſent me up my ſolitary dinner, I gave the meſſenger a billet, in which I made it my humble requeſt through him to my father, to be permitted to go to church this afternoon.

This was the contemptuous anſwer: 'Tell her, that her requeſt will be 'taken into conſideration *to-morrow*.'—My requeſt to go to church *to-day* to be taken into conſideration *to-morrow!*

Patience will be the fitteſt return I can make to ſuch an inſult. But this method will not do with me; indeed it will not! And yet it is but the beginning, I ſuppoſe, of what I am to expect from my brother, now I am delivered up to him.

* *

ON recollection, I thought it beſt to renew my requeſt. I did. The following is a copy of what I wrote, and what follows that, of the anſwer ſent me.

'SIR,

'I Know not what to make of the an-
'swer brought to my requeſt of
'being permitted to go to church this
'afternoon. If you deſigned to ſhew
'your pleaſantry by it, I hope that
'will continue; and then my requeſt
'will be granted.

'You know, that I never abſented
'myſelf when well, and at home, till
'the two laſt Sundays; when I was
'*adviſed* not to go. My preſent ſitu-
'ation is ſuch, that I never more want-
'ed the benefit of the publick prayers.

'I will ſolemnly engage only to go
'thither, and back again.

'I hope it cannot be thought that I
'would do otherwiſe.

'My dejection of ſpirits will give
'a too juſt excuſe on the ſcore of in-
'diſpoſition for avoiding viſits. Nor
'will I, but by diſtant civilities, return
'the compliments of any of my ac-
'quaintance. My diſgraces, if they
'are to have an end, need not to be pro-
'claimed to the whole world. I aſk
'this favour, therefore, for my repu-
'tation's ſake, that I may be able to
'hold up my head in the neighbour-
'hood, if I live to ſee an end of the
'unmerited ſeverities which ſeem to be
'deſigned for *your unhappy ſiſter*,

'CL. HARLOWE.'

'TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

'FOR a girl to lay ſo much ſtreſs
'upon going to church, and yet
'reſolve to defy her parents, in an ar-
'ticle of the greateſt conſequence to
'them, and to the whole family, is an
'abſurdity. You are recommended,
'Miſs, to the practice of your *private*
'devotions. May they be efficacious
'upon the mind of one of the moſt
'pervicatious young creatures that ever
'was heard of! The *intention* is, I tell
'you plainly, to mortify you into a
'ſenſe of your duty. The neighbours
'you are ſo ſolicitous to appear well
'with, already know, that you defy
that. So, Miſs, if you have a real
value for your reputation, ſhew it as
'you ought. It is yet in your own
'power to eſtabliſh or impair it.

'JA. HARLOWE.'

Thus, my dear Miſs Howe, has my brother got me into his ſnares; and I, like a poor ſilly bird, the more I ſtruggle, am the more entangled.

LETTER XXIII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

MONDAY MORNING, MARCH 6.

THEY are reſolved to break my heart. My poor Hannah is diſcharged—diſgracefully diſcharged!—Thus it was.

Within half an hour after I had ſent the poor girl down for my breakfaſt, that bold creature Betty Barnes, my ſiſter's confidante and ſervant, (if a favourite maid and confidante can be deemed a *ſervant*) came up.

'What, Miſs, will you pleaſe to
'have for breakfaſt?'

I was ſurprized. 'What will I have
'for breakfaſt, Betty!—How!—What!
'—How comes it!'—Then I named Hannah. I could not tell what to ſay.

'Don't be ſurprized, Miſs—But
'you'll ſee Hannah no more in this
'houſe.'

'God forbid!—Is any harm come
'to Hannah?—What! what is the
'matter with Hannah?'

'Why, Miſs, the ſhort and the long
'is this: your papa and mamma think
'Hannah has ſtaid long enough in the
'houſe to do miſchief; and ſo ſhe is or-
'dered to *troop*;' [that was the confident creature's word] 'and I am di-
'rected to wait upon you in her ſtead.'

I burſt into tears. 'I have no ſer-
'vice for you, Betty Barnes; none at
'all. But where is Hannah? Cannot
'I ſpeak with the poor girl? I owe her
'half a year's wages. May I not ſee
'the honeſt creature, and pay her her
'wages? I may never ſee her again
'perhaps; for they are reſolved to break
'my heart.'

'And they think you are reſolved to
'break theirs: ſo tit for tat, Miſs.'

Impertinent I called her; and aſked her, if it were upon ſuch confident terms that her ſervice was to begin.

I was ſo very earneſt to ſee the poor maid, that (to *oblige* me, as ſhe ſaid) ſhe went down with my requeſt.

The

The worthy creature was as earneſt to ſee me; and the favour was granted in preſence of Shorey and Betty.

I thanked her, when ſhe came up, for her paſt ſervice to me.

Her heart was ready to break. And ſhe began to vindicate her fidelity and love; and diſclaimed any miſchief ſhe had ever made.

I told her that thoſe who occaſioned her being turned out of my ſervice, made no queſtion of her integrity: that her diſmiſſion was intended for an indignity to me. That I was very ſorry to be obliged to part with her, and hoped ſhe would meet with as good a ſervice.

Never, never! wringing her hands, ſhould ſhe meet with a miſtreſs ſhe loved ſo well. And the poor creature ran on in my praiſes, and in profeſſions of love to me.

We are all apt, you know, my dear, to praiſe our benefactors, becauſe they *are* our benefactors; as if every-body did right or wrong, as they obliged or diſobliged *us*. But this good creature *deſerved* to be kindly treated; ſo I could have no merit in favouring one whom it would have been ungrateful not to diſtinguiſh.

I gave her a little linen, ſome laces, and other odd things; and inſtead of four pounds which were due to her, ten guineas: and ſaid, if ever I were again allowed to be my own miſtreſs, I would think of *her* in the firſt place.

Betty enviouſly whiſpered Shorey upon it.

Hannah told me, before their faces, having no other opportunity, that ſhe had been examined about letters *to* me, and *from* me; and that ſhe had given her pockets to Miſs Harlowe, who looked into them, and put her fingers in her ſtays, to ſatisfy herſelf that ſhe had not any.

She gave me an account of the number of my pheaſants and bantams; and I ſaid, they ſhould be my own care twice or thrice a day.

We wept over each other at parting. The girl prayed for all the family.

To have ſo good a ſervant ſo diſgracefully diſmiſſed, is very cruel: and I could not help ſaying, that theſe methods might break my heart, but not any other way anſwer the end of the authors of my diſgraces.

Betty, with a very ſaucy ſneer, ſaid to Shorey, There would be a trial of ſkill about that, ſhe fancied. But I took no notice of it. If this wench thinks that I have robbed her young miſtreſs of a lover, as you ſay ſhe has given out, ſhe may believe that it is ſome degree of merit in herſelf to be impertinent to me.

Thus have I been forced to part with my faithful Hannah. If you can commend the good creature to a place worthy of her, pray do for my ſake.

LETTER XXIV.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

MONDAY, NEAR 12 O'CLOCK.

THE incloſed letter was juſt now delivered to me.

My brother has carried all his points. I ſend you alſo the copy of my anſwer. No more at this time can I write!

'MONDAY, MAR. 6.

'MISS CLARY,

'BY command of your father and 'mother I write expreſsly to for-'bid you to come into their preſence, 'or into the garden when *they* are there: 'nor when they are *not* there, but with 'Betty Barnes to attend you; except by 'particular licence or command.

'On their bleſſings you are forbidden 'likewiſe to correſpond with the vile 'Lovelace; as it is well known you did 'by means of your ſly Hannah. Whence 'her ſudden diſcharge. As was fit.

'Neither are you to correſpond with 'Miſs Howe; who has given herſelf 'high airs of late; and might poſſibly 'help on your correſpondence with that 'deteſted libertine. Nor, in ſhort, with 'any-body without leave.

'You are not to enter into the pre-'ſence of either of your uncles, without 'their leave firſt obtained. It is in *mercy* 'to you, after ſuch a behaviour to your 'mother, that your father refuſes to ſee 'you.

'You are not to be ſeen in any apart-'ment of the houſe you ſo lately go-'verned as you pleaſed, unleſs you are 'commanded down.

'In ſhort, you are ſtrictly to confine 'yourſelf to your chamber, except now-'and-then, in Betty Barnes's ſight, (as 'aforeſaid) you take a morning or even-'ing turn in the garden: and then you

'are to go directly, and without ſtopping at any apartment in the way, up and down the back-ſtairs, that the ſight of ſo perverſe a young creature may not add to the pain you have given every-body.

'The hourly threatenings of your fine fellow, as well as your own unheard-of obſtinacy, will account to you for all this. What a hand has the beſt and moſt indulgent of mothers had with you, who ſo long pleaded for you, and undertook for you; even when others, from the manner of your ſetting out, deſpaired of moving you!—What muſt your perverſeneſs have been, that *ſuch* a mother can give you up! She thinks it right ſo to do: nor will take you to favour, unleſs you make the firſt ſteps, by a compliance with your duty.

'As for myſelf, whom perhaps you think hardly of, [in very good company, if you do, that is my conſolation;] I have adviſed, that you may be permitted to purſue your own inclinations, (ſome people need no greater puniſhment than ſuch a permiſſion) and not to have the houſe encumbered by one who muſt give them the more pain for the neceſſity ſhe has laid them under of avoiding the ſight of her, although in it.

'If any-thing I have written appear ſevere or harſh, it is ſtill in your power (but perhaps will not always be ſo) to remedy it; and that by a ſingle word.

'Betty Barnes has orders to obey you in all points conſiſtent with her duty to thoſe to whom *you* owe it, as well as *ſhe*.

'JA. HARLOWE.'

'TO JAMES HARLOWE, JUNIOR, ESQ.

'SIR,

'I Will only ſay, That you may congratulate yourſelf on having *ſo far* ſucceeded in all your views, that you may report what you pleaſe of me, and I can no more defend myſelf, than if I were dead. Yet one favour, nevertheleſs, I will beg of you. It is this—That you will not occaſion more ſeverities, more diſgraces, than are neceſſary for carrying into execution your further deſigns, whatever they be, againſt *your unhappy ſiſter*,

'CLARISSA HARLOWE.'

LETTER XXV.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

TUESDAY, MARCH 7.

BY my laſt depoſit, you will ſee how I am driven, and what a poor priſoner I am.—No regard had to my reputation. The whole matter is now before you. Can *ſuch* meaſures be ſuppoſed to ſoften?—But ſurely they can only mean to try to frighten me into my brother's views!—All my hope is, to be able to weather this point till my couſin Morden comes from Florence; and he is ſoon expected: yet, if they are determined upon a ſhort day, I doubt he will not be here time enough to ſave me.

It is plain by my brother's letter, that my mother has not ſpared me, in the report ſhe was pleaſed to make of the conference between herſelf and me: yet ſhe was pleaſed to hint to me, that my brother had views which ſhe would have had me try to diſappoint. But, indeed, ſhe had engaged to give a *faithful* account of what was to paſs between herſelf and me: and it was, doubtleſs, much more eligible to give up a daughter, than to diſoblige a huſband, and every other perſon of the family.

They think they have done every-thing by turning away my poor Hannah: but as long as the liberty of the garden, and my poultry viſits, are allowed me, they will be miſtaken.

I aſked Mrs. Betty if ſhe had any orders to watch or attend me; or whether I was to aſk *her* leave whenever I ſhould be diſpoſed to walk in the garden, or to go to feed my bantams?—Lord bleſs her! what could I mean by ſuch a queſtion! Yet ſhe owned, that ſhe had heard that I was not to go into the garden, when my father, mother, or uncles, were there.

However, as it behoved me to be aſſured on this head, I went down directly, and ſtaid an hour, without queſtion or impediment; and yet a good part of the time I walked under and in *ſight*, as I may ſay, of my brother's ſtudy-window, where both he and my ſiſter happened to be. And I am ſure they ſaw me, by the loud mirth they affected, by way of inſult, as I ſuppoſe.

So this part of my reſtraint was doubtleſs

leſs a ſtretch of the authority given him. The enforcing of that may perhaps come next. But I hope not.

TUESDAY NIGHT.

SINCE I wrote the above, I ventured to ſend a letter by Shorey to my mother. I deſired her to give it into her own hand, when nobody was by.

I ſhall incloſe the copy of it. You will ſee that I would have it thought, that now Hannah is gone, I have no way to correſpond out of the houſe. I am far from thinking all I do, right. I am afraid this is a little piece of art, that is *not* ſo. But this is an after-thought—The letter went firſt.

'HONOURED MADAM,

'HAVING acknowledged to you 'that I had received letters from 'Mr. Lovelace full of reſentment, and 'that I anſwered them purely to pre-'vent further miſchief; and having 'ſhewn you copies of my anſwers, 'which you did not diſapprove of, al-'though you thought fit, after you had 'read them, to forbid me any further 'correſpondence with him; I think it 'my duty to acquaint you, that another 'letter from him has ſince come to my 'hand, in which he is very earneſt with 'me to permit him to wait on my papa, 'or you, or my two uncles, in a paci-'fick way, accompanied by Lord M. 'on which I beg your commands.

'I own to you, Madam, that had not 'the prohibition been renewed, and had 'not Hannah been ſo ſuddenly diſmiſ-'ſed my ſervice, I ſhould have made 'the leſs ſcruple to have written an an-'ſwer, and to have commanded her to 'convey it to him, with all ſpeed, in 'order to diſſuade him from theſe viſits, 'leſt any-thing ſhould happen on the 'occaſion that my heart aches but to 'think of.

'And here I cannot but expreſs my 'grief, that I ſhould have all the pu-'niſhment, and all the blame, who, as 'I have reaſon to think, have prevent-'ed great miſchief, and have not been 'the occaſion of any. For, Madam, 'could *I* be ſuppoſed to govern the paſ-'ſions of *either* of the gentlemen?—'Over the one indeed I have had ſome 'little influence, without giving him '*hitherto* any reaſon to think he has 'faſtened an obligation upon me for 'it—Over the other, who, Madam, has 'any?—I am grieved at heart, to be 'obliged to lay ſo great blame at my 'brother's door, although my reputa-'tion and my liberty are both to be ſa-'crificed to his reſentment and ambi-'tion. May not, however, ſo deep a 'ſufferer be permitted to ſpeak out?

'This communication being as vo-'luntarily made, as dutifully intended; 'I humbly preſume to hope, that I ſhall 'not be required to produce the letter 'itſelf. I cannot either in honour or 'prudence do that, becauſe of the vehe-'mence of his ſtyle; for having heard '[not, I aſſure you, by my means, or 'through Hannah's] of ſome part of 'the harſh treatment I have met with; 'he thinks himſelf entitled to place it 'to his own account, by reaſon of 'ſpeeches thrown out by ſome of my 'relations, *equally* vehement.

'If I do *not* anſwer him, he will be 'made deſperate, and think himſelf 'juſtified (though I ſhall not think him 'ſo) in reſenting the treatment he com-'plains of: if I *do*, and if, in compli-'ment to me, he forbears to reſent what 'he thinks himſelf entitled to reſent; 'be pleaſed, Madam, to conſider the 'obligation he will ſuppoſe he lays me 'under.

'If I were as ſtrongly prepoſſeſſed in 'his favour as is ſuppoſed, I ſhould not 'have wiſhed this to be conſidered by 'you. And permit me, as a ſtill fur-'ther proof that I am *not* prepoſſeſſed, 'to beg of you to conſider, whether, 'upon the whole, the propoſal I made, 'of declaring for the ſingle life, (which 'I will religiouſly adhere to) is not the 'beſt way to get rid of his pretenſions 'with honour. To renounce him, and 'not be allowed to aver that I will ne-'ver be the other man's, will make him 'conclude (driven as I am driven) that 'I am determined in that other man's 'favour.

'If this has not it's due weight, my 'brother's ſtrange ſchemes muſt be 'tried, and I will reſign myſelf to my 'deſtiny with all the acquieſcence that 'ſhall be granted to my prayers. And 'ſo leaving the whole to your own 'wiſdom, and whether you chuſe to 'conſult my papa and uncles upon this 'humble application, or not; or whe-'ther I ſhall be allowed to write an an-'ſwer to Mr. Lovelace, or not, [And

'if

'if allowed so to do, I beg your direc-
'tion, by whom to send it;] I remain,
'*honoured Madam, your unhappy, but*
'*ever-dutiful daughter,*

'CL. HARLOWE.'

WEDNESDAY MORNING.

I HAVE just received an answer to the inclosed letter. My mother, you will observe, has ordered me to burn it: but, as you will have it in your safe keeping, and nobody else will see it, her end will be equally answered, as if it were burnt. It has neither date nor superscription.

'CLARISSA,

'SAY not all the blame and all the
'punishment is yours. I am as much
'blamed and as much punished as you
'are; yet am more innocent. When your
'obstinacy is equal to any other person's
'passion, blame not your brother. We
'judged right, that Hannah carried on
'your correspondences. Now she is
'gone, and you cannot write [We *think*
'you cannot] to Miss Howe, nor she to
'you, without our knowledge, one cause
'of uneasiness and jealousy is over.

'I had no dislike to Hannah. I did
'not tell her so; because somebody was
'within hearing when she desired to pay
'her duty to me at going. I gave her
'a caution, in a raised voice, to take
'care, wherever she went to live next,
'if there were any young ladies, how
'she made parties, and assisted in clan-
'destine correspondences—But I slid
'two guineas into her hand. Nor was
'I angry to hear that you were still
'*more* bountiful to her.—So much for
'Hannah.

'I don't know what to write, about
'your answering that man of violence.
'What can you think of it, that such a
'family as ours should have such a rod
'held over it?—For my part, I have
'not owned that I know you *have*
'corresponded: by your last boldness
'to me [An astonishing one it was, to
'pursue before Mr. Solmes the sub-
'ject that I was forced to break from
'above-stairs!] you may, as far as I
'know, plead, that you had my coun-
'tenance for your correspondence with
'him; and so add to the uneasiness be-
'tween your father and me. You was
'once all my comfort, Clarissa: you
'made all my hardships tolerable—but
'now!—However, nothing, it is plain,
'can move you; and I will say no more
'on that head: for you are under your
'father's discipline now; and he will
'neither be prescribed to, nor entreated.

'I should have been glad to see the
'letter you tell me of, as I saw the rest
'—you say, both honour and prudence
'forbid you to shew it to me.—O
'Clarissa! what think you of receiving
'letters that honour and prudence for-
'bid you to shew to a mother!—But it
'is not for me to see it, if you would
'*chuse* to shew it me. I will not be in
'your secret. I will not know that
'you did correspond. And, as to an
'answer, take your own methods.
'But let him know it will be the last
'you will write. And, if you do
'write, I won't see it: so seal it up
'(if you do) and give it to Shorey;
'and she—Yet do not think I give you
'licence to write.

'We will be upon no conditions
'with him, nor will *you* be allowed to
'be upon any. Your father and un-
'cles would have no patience were he
'to come. What have *you* to do to
'oblige *him* with your refusal of Mr.
'Solmes?—Will not that refusal be to
'give *him* hope? And while he has
'any, can *we* be easy or free from his
'insults? Were even your brother in
'*fault*, as that fault cannot be con-
'quered, is a sister to carry on a corre-
'spondence that shall endanger her
'brother? But your father has given
'his sanction to your brother's dis-
'likes, and they are now your father's
'dislikes, and my dislikes, your un-
'cles and every-body's!—No matter
'to *whom* owing.

'As to the rest, you have by your
'obstinacy put it out of my power to
'do any thing for you. Your father
'takes upon himself to be answerable
'for all consequences. You must not
'therefore apply to me for favour. I
'shall endeavour to be only an obser-
'ver; happy, if I could be an uncon-
'cerned one!—While I had power,
'you would not let me use it as I
'*would* have used it. Your aunt has
'been forced to engage not to interfere
'but by your father's direction. You'll
'have severe trials. If you have any
'favour to hope for, it must be from
'the mediation of your uncles. And
'yet, I believe, they are equally deter-
'mined: for they make it a principle
'[Alas! they never had children!]

'that

'that that child, who in marriage is 'not governed by her parents, is to be 'given up as a loſt creature.

'I charge you, let not this letter be 'found. Burn it. There is too much 'of the *mother* in it, to a daughter ſo 'unaccountably obſtinate.

'Write not another letter to me. I 'can do nothing for you. But you 'can do every-thing for yourſelf.'

Now, my dear, to proceed with my melancholy narrative.

After this letter, you will believe, that I could have very little hopes, that an application directly to my father would ſtand me in any ſtead: but I thought it became me to write, were it but to acquit myſelf *to* myſelf, that I have left nothing unattempted that has the leaſt likelihood to reſtore me to his favour. Accordingly I wrote to the following effect.

'I Preſume not, I ſay, to argue with 'my papa; I only beg his mercy 'and indulgence in this *one* point, on 'which depends my preſent and per- 'haps my *future* happineſs; and be- 'ſeech him not to reprobate his child 'for an averſion which it is not in her 'power to conquer. I beg, that I 'may not be ſacrificed to projects, and 'remote contingencies. I complain of 'the diſgraces I ſuffer in this baniſh- 'ment from his preſence, and in being 'confined to my chamber. In every- 'thing but this *one* point, I promiſe 'implicit duty and reſignation to his 'will. I repeat my offers of a ſingle 'life; and appeal to him, whether I 'have ever given him cauſe to doubt 'my word. I beg to be admitted to 'his, and to my mamma's preſence, 'and that my conduct may be under 'their own eye: and this with the 'more earneſtneſs, as I have too much 'reaſon to believe, that ſnares are laid 'for me; and tauntings and revilings 'uſed on purpoſe to make a handle of 'my words againſt me, when I am not 'permitted to ſpeak in my own de- 'fence. I conclude with hoping, that 'my brother's inſtigations may not 'rob an unhappy child of her father.'

This is the anſwer, ſent without ſuperſcription, and unſealed, although by Betty Barnes, who delivered it with an air, as if ſhe knew the contents.

WEDNESDAY.

'I Write, perverſe girl; but with all 'the indignation that your diſobe- 'dience deſerves. To deſire to be for- 'given a fault you own, and yet re- 'ſolve to perſevere in, is a boldneſs, 'no more to be equalled, than paſſed 'over. It is *my* authority you defy. 'Your reflections upon a brother, that 'is an honour to us all, deſerve my 'utmoſt reſentment. I ſee how light 'all relationſhip ſits upon *you*. The '*cauſe* I gueſs at, too. I cannot bear 'the reflections that naturally ariſe 'from this conſideration. Your be- 'haviour to your too indulgent, and 'too fond mother—But I have no pa- 'tience—Continue baniſhed from my 'preſence, undutiful as you are, till 'you know how to conform to my 'will. Ingrateful creature! Your let- 'ter but upbraids me for my paſt in- 'dulgence. Write no more to me, till 'you can diſtinguiſh better; and till 'you are convinced of your duty to

'*A juſtly-incenſed Father.*'

This angry letter was accompanied with one from my mother, unſealed, and unſuperſcribed alſo. Thoſe who take ſo much pains to confederate every one againſt me, I make no doubt, obliged her to bear her teſtimony againſt the poor girl.

My mother's letter being a repetition of ſome of the ſevere things that paſſed between herſelf and me, of which I have already informed you, I ſhall not need to give you the contents—Only thus far, that *ſhe* alſo praiſes my brother, and blames me for my freedoms with him.

LETTER XXVI.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

THURSDAY MORN. MARCH 9.

I Have another letter from Mr. Lovelace, although I had not anſwered his former.

This man, ſome how or other, knows every-thing that paſſes in our family. My confinement; Hannah's diſmiſſion; and more of the reſentments and reſolutions of my father, uncles, and brother, than I can poſſibly know, and almoſt

moſt as ſoon as the things happen which he tells me of. He cannot come at theſe intelligences fairly.

He is exceſſively uneaſy upon what he hears; and his expreſſions both of love to me, and reſentment to them, are very fervent. He ſolicits me, to engage my honour to him, never to have Mr. Solmes.

I think I may fairly promiſe him that I will not.

He begs, That I will not think he is endeavouring to make to himſelf a *merit* at any man's expence, ſince he hopes to obtain my favour on the foot of his *own*; nor that he ſeeks to *intimidate* me into a conſideration for him. But declares, that the treatment he meets with from my family is of ſuch a nature, that he is perpetually reproached for not reſenting it; and that as well by Lord M. and Lady Sarah, and Lady Betty, as by all his other friends: and if he muſt have no hope from me, he cannot anſwer for what his deſpair will make him do.

Indeed, he ſays, his relations, the ladies particularly, adviſe him to have recourſe to a *legal* remedy: but how, he aſks, can a man of honour go to law for verbal abuſes given by people entitled to wear ſwords?

You ſee, my dear, that my mother ſeems as apprehenſive of miſchief as myſelf; and has *indirectly* offered to let Shorey carry my anſwer to the letter he ſent me before.

He is full of the favour of the ladies of his family to me: to whom, nevertheleſs, I am perſonally a ſtranger; except that once I ſaw Miſs Patty Montague at Mrs. Knollys's.

It is natural, I believe, for a perſon to be the more deſirous of making new friends, in proportion as ſhe loſes the favour of old ones: yet had I rather appear amiable in the eyes of my own relations, and in your eyes, than in thoſe of all the world beſides.—But theſe four ladies of his family have ſuch excellent characters, that one cannot but wiſh to be thought well of by them. Cannot there be a way to find out by Mrs. Forteſcue's means, or by Mr. Hickman, who has ſome knowledge of Lord M. [covertly, however] what their opinions are of the preſent ſituation of things in our family; and of the little likelihood there is, that ever the alliance once approved of by them, can take effect?

I cannot, for my own part, think ſo well of myſelf, as to imagine, that they can wiſh their kinſman to perſevere in his views with regard to me, through ſuch contempts and diſcouragements. —Not that it would concern me, ſhould they adviſe him to the contrary. By my lord's ſigning Mr. Lovelace's former letter; by Mr. Lovelace's aſſurances of the continued favour of all his relations; and by the report of others; I ſeem ſtill to ſtand high in their favour: but, methinks, I ſhould be glad to have this confirmed to me, as from themſelves, by the lips of an indifferent perſon; and the rather, as they are known to put a value upon their alliance, becauſe of their fortunes and family; and take it amiſs (as they have reaſon) to be included by *ours* in the contempt thrown upon their kinſman.

Curioſity at preſent is all my motive: nor will there ever, I hope, be a ſtronger, notwithſtanding your queſtionable *throbs*—even were the merits of Mr. Lovelace much greater than they are.

* *

I HAVE anſwered his letters. If he takes me at my word, I ſhall need to be the leſs ſolicitous for the opinions of his relations in my favour: and yet one would be glad to be well thought of by the worthy.

This is the ſubſtance of my letter.

I expreſs my ſurprize at his knowing (and ſo early) all that paſſes here.

I aſſure him, That were there not ſuch a man in the world as himſelf, I would not have Mr. Solmes.

I tell him, That to return, as I underſtand he does, defiances for defiances, to my relations, is far from being a proof with me, either of his politeneſs, or of the conſideration he pretends to have for me.

That the moment I hear he viſits any of my friends without their conſent, I will make a reſolution never to ſee him more, if I can help it.

I apprize him, That I am connived at in ſending this letter, (although no one has ſeen the contents) provided it ſhall be the laſt I will ever write to him: that I had more than once told him, that the ſingle life was my choice; and

and this before Mr. Solmes was introduced as a viſitor in our family. That Mr. Wyerley, and other gentlemen, knew it to be my choice, before himſelf was acquainted with any of us; that I had never been induced to receive a line from him on the ſubject, but that I thought he had not acted ungenerouſly by my brother; and yet had not been ſo handſomely treated by my friends, as he might have expected: but that had he even my friends on his ſide, I ſhould have very great objections to him, were I to get over my choice of a ſingle life, ſo really preferable to me as it is; and that I ſhould have declared as much to him, had I regarded him as *more* than a common viſitor. On all theſe accounts, I deſire, that the one more letter, which I will allow him to depoſit in the uſual place, may be the very *laſt*; and that only, to acquaint me with his acquieſcence that it ſhall be ſo; at leaſt till happier times.

This laſt I put in that he may not be quite deſperate. But if he take me at my word, I ſhall be rid of one of my tormentors.

I have promiſed to lay before you all his letters, and my anſwers: I repeat that promiſe; and am the leſs ſolicitous, for that reaſon, to amplify upon the contents of either. But I cannot too often expreſs my vexation, to be driven to ſuch ſtreights and difficulties, here at home, as oblige me to anſwer letters (from a man I had not abſolutely intended to encourage, and to whom I had really great objections) filled as *his* are with ſuch warm proteſtations, and written to me with a ſpirit of expectation.

For, my dear, you never knew ſo bold a ſuppoſer. As commentators find beauties in an author, to which the author perhaps was a ſtranger; ſo he ſometimes compliments me in high ſtrains of gratitude for favours, and for a conſideration, which I never deſigned him; inſomuch that I am frequently under a neceſſity of explaining away the attributed goodneſs to him, which if I ſhewed, I ſhould have the leſs opinion of myſelf.

In ſhort, my dear, like a reſtiff horſe, (as I have heard deſcribed by ſportſmen) he pains one's hands, and half disjoints one's arms, to rein him in. And, when you ſee his letters, you muſt form no judgment upon them, till you have read my anſwers. If you do, you will indeed think you have cauſe to attribute *ſelf deceit*, and *throbs*, and *glows* to your friend—And yet, at other times, the contradictory creature complains, that I ſhew him as little favour, and my friends as much inveteracy, as if in the rencounter betwixt my brother and him, he had been the aggreſſor; and as if the cataſtrophe had been as fatal, as it might have been.

If he had a deſign by this conduct (ſometimes complaining of my ſhyneſs, at others exulting in my imaginary favours) to induce me at one time to acquieſce with his compliments; at another to be more complaiſant for his complaints; and if the contradiction be not the effect of his inattention and giddineſs; I ſhall think him as deep and as artful (too probably, as *practiſed*) a creature, as ever lived; and were I to be ſure of it, ſhould hate him, if poſſible, worſe than I do Solmes.

But enough for the preſent of a creature ſo very various.

LETTER XXVII.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

THURSDAY NIGHT, MARCH 9.

I Have not patience with any of the people you are with. I know not what to adviſe you to do. How do you know, that you are not puniſhable for being the cauſe, though to your own loſs, that the will of your grandfather is not complied with?—Wills are ſacred things, child. You ſee, that they, even *they*, think ſo, who imagine they ſuffer by a will, through the diſtinction paid you in it.

I allow of all your noble reaſonings for what you did at the time: but ſince ſuch a charming, ſuch a generous inſtance of filial duty is to go thus unrewarded, why ſhould you not reſume?

Your grandfather knew the family-failing. He knew what a noble ſpirit you had to do good. He himſelf perhaps [Excuſe me, my dear] had done too little in his life-time; and therefore he put it in your power to make up for the defects of the whole family. Were it to me, I would reſume it. Indeed I would.

You will say, you cannot do it, while you are with them. I don't know that. Do you think they can use you worse than they do? And is it not your *right?* And do they not make use of your own generosity to oppress you? Your uncle Harlowe is one trustee; your cousin Morden is the other: insist upon your right to your uncle; and write to your cousin Morden about it. This, I dare say, will make them alter their behaviour to you.

Your insolent brother—what has *he* to do to controul you?—Were it me, [I wish it were for one month, and no more] I'd shew him the difference. I would be in my own mansion, pursuing my charming schemes, and making all around me happy. I would set up my own chariot. I would visit them when they deserved it. But when my brother and sister gave themselves airs, I would let them know, that I was their sister, and not their servant: and, if that did not do, I would shut my gates against them; and bid them go, and be company for each other.

It must be confessed, however, that this brother and sister of yours, judging as such narrow spirits will ever judge, have some reason for treating you as they do. It must have long been a mortification to them (set disappointed love on her side, and avarice on his, out of the question) to be so much eclipsed by a younger sister. Such a sun in a family, where there are none but faint twinklers, how could they bear it! Why, my dear, they must look upon you as a prodigy among them: and prodigies, you know, though they obtain our admiration, never attract our love. The distance between you and them is immense. Their eyes ache to look up at you. What shades does your full day of merit cast upon them! Can you wonder then, that they should embrace the first opportunity that offered, to endeavour to bring you down to their level?

Depend upon it, my dear, you will have more of it, and more still, as you bear it.

As to this odious Solmes, I wonder not at your aversion to him. It is needless to say any thing to you, who have so sincere an antipathy to him, to strengthen your dislike: yet, who can resist her own talents? One of mine, as I have heretofore said, is to give an ugly likeness. Shall I indulge it?—I will. And the rather, as, in doing so, you will have my opinion in justification of your aversion to him, and in approbation of a steadiness that I ever admired and must for ever approve of in your temper.

I was twice in this wretch's company. At one of the times your Lovelace was there. I need not mention to you, who have such a *pretty curiosity*, (though at present, *only* a curiosity, you know) the unspeakable difference.

Lovelace entertained the company in his lively gay way, and made everybody laugh at one of his stories. It was before this creature was thought of for you. Solmes laughed too. It was, however, *his* laugh: for his first three years, at least, I imagine, must have been one continual fit of crying; and his muscles have never yet been able to recover a risible tone. His very smile [You never saw him smile, I believe; never at least gave him cause to smile] is so little natural to his features, that it appears in him as hideous as the *grin* of a man in malice.

I took great notice of him, as I do of all the noble lords of the creation, in their peculiarities; and was disgusted, nay, shocked at him, even then. I was glad, I remember, on that particular occasion, to see his strange features recovering their natural gloominess; though they did this but slowly, as if the muscles which contributed to his distortions, had turned upon rusty springs.

What a dreadful thing must even the *love* of such a husband be! For my part, were I his wife! (But what have I done to myself, to make but such a supposition?) I should never have comfort but in his absence, or when I was quarrelling with him. A splenetick woman, who must have somebody to find fault with, might indeed be brought to endure such a wretch: the sight of him would always furnish out the occasion, and all her servants, for that reason, and for *that* only, would have cause to bless their master. But how grievous and apprehensive a thing must it be for his wife, had she the least degree *of* delicacy to catch herself in having done something to oblige him?

So much for his person: as to the other half of him, he is said to be an insinuating,

insinuating, creeping mortal, to anybody he hopes to be a gainer by; an insolent, over-bearing one, where he has no such views. And is not this the genuine spirit of meanness? He is reported to be spiteful and malicious, even to the whole family of any single person who has once disobliged him; and to his own relations most of all. I am told, that they are none of them such wretches as himself. This may be one reason why he is for disinheriting them.

My Kitty, from one of his domesticks, tells me, that his tenants hate him: and that he never had a servant who spoke well of him. Vilely suspicious of their wronging him (probably from the badness of his own heart) he is always changing.

His pockets, they say, are continually crammed with keys: so that when he would treat a guest (A *friend* he has not out of your family) he is half an long puzzling *which* is *which*, as his niggardly treat might be concluded in. And if it be wine, he always fetches it himself. Nor has he much trouble in doing so; for he has very few visitors—only those, whom business or necessity brings: for a gentleman who can help it, would rather be benighted, than put up at his house.

Yet this is the man they have found out (for considerations as sordid as those he is governed by) for a husband, that is to say, for a lord and master, for Miss Clarissa Harlowe!

But perhaps, he may not be quite so miserable as he is represented. Characters extremely good, or extremely bad, are seldom justly given. Favour for a person will exalt the one, as disfavour will sink the other. But your uncle Antony has told my mother, who objected to his covetousness, that it was intended *to tie him* up, as he called it, *to your own terms*; which would be with a hempen, rather than a matrimonial cord, I dare say. But, is not this a plain indication, that even his own recommenders think him a mean creature; and that he must be articled with —perhaps for *necessaries?* But enough, and too much, of such a wretch as this!—You must not have him, my dear—that I am clear in—though not so clear, how you will be able to avoid it, except you assert the independence to which your estate gives you a title.

* * *

Here my mother broke in upon me. She wanted to see what I had written. I was silly enough to read Solmes's character to her.

She owned, that the man was not the most desirable of men; and that he had not the happiest appearance: 'But 'what,' said she, 'is *person* in a man?' And I was chidden for setting you against complying with your father's will. Then followed a lecture upon the preference to be given in favour of a man who took care to discharge all his obligations to the world, and to keep all together, in opposition to a spendthrift or profligate: a fruitful subject you know, whether any particular person be meant by it, or not.

Why will these wise parents, by saying too much against the persons they dislike, put one upon defending them? Lovelace is not a spendthrift; owes not obligations to the world; though, I doubt not, profligate enough. Then, putting one upon doing *such* but common justice, we must needs be prepossessed, truly!—And so perhaps we are put upon *curiosities* first, that is to say, how *such a one* or *his friends* may think of one:—and then, but too probably, comes in a distinguishing preference, or something that looks exceedingly like it.

My mother charged me at last, to write that side over again.—'But excuse me, my good mamma!' I would not have the character lost upon any consideration; since my vein ran freely into it: and I never wrote to please myself, but I pleased you. A very good reason why—We have but one mind between us—only, that sometimes you are a little too grave, methinks; I, no doubt, a little too flippant in your opinion.

This difference in our tempers, however, is probably the reason that we love one another *so* well, that in the words of Norris, no *third love* can come in betwixt. Since each, in the other's eye, having something amiss, and each loving the other well enough to bear being told of it; (and the rather perhaps as neither wishes to mend it) this takes off a good deal from that rivalry which might encourage a little (if not a great deal) of that latent spleen, which in time might rise into envy, and that into ill-will. So, my

dear, if this be the caſe, let each keep her fault, and much good may do her with it, ſay I: for there is conſtitution in both to plead for it. And what an hero or heroine muſt he or ſhe be, who can conquer a conſtitutional fault? Let it be *avarice*, as in ſome I *dare not* name: let it be *gravity*, as in my *beſt friend*; or let it be *flippancy*, as in—I need not ſay whom.

It is proper to acquaint you, that I was obliged to comply with my mother's *curioſity*, [My mother has her ſhare, her *full* ſhare, of *curioſity*, my dear] and to let her ſee here-and-there ſome paſſages in your letters.

I am broken in upon—but I will tell you by-and-by what paſſed between my mother and me on this occaſion—and the rather, as ſhe had her GIRL, her favourite HICKMAN, and your LOVELACE, all at once in her eye, in her part of the converſation.

* *

THUS it was.

'I cannot but think, Nancy,' ſaid ſhe, 'after all, that there is a little 'hardſhip in Miſs Harlowe's caſe: and 'yet (as her mother ſays) it is a grat-'ing thing to have a child, who was 'always noted for her duty in *ſmaller* 'points, to ſtand in oppoſition to her 'parents will, in the *greater*; yea, in 'the *greateſt of all*. And now, to 'middle the matter between both, it 'is pity, that the man *they* favour has 'not that ſort of merit which a perſon 'of a mind ſo delicate as that of Miſs 'Harlowe might reaſonably expect in 'a huſband.—But, then, this man is 'ſurely preferable to a libertine; to a 'libertine too, who has had a duel 'with her own brother: *fathers* and '*mothers* muſt think ſo, were it *not* for 'that circumſtance—And it is ſtrange 'if *they* do not know beſt.'

'And ſo they muſt,' thought I, 'from 'their experience, if no little dirty views 'give *them* alſo that prepoſſeſſion in one 'man's favour, which they are ſo apt to 'cenſure their daughters for having in 'another's.'—And if, as I may add in your caſe, they have no creeping, old, muſty uncle Antony's to ſtrengthen their prepoſſeſſions, as he does my mother's—Poor, creeping, poſitive ſoul, what has ſuch an old batchelor as he to do, to prate about the duties of children to parents; unleſs he had a notion that parents owe ſome to their children? But your mother, by her indolent meekneſs, let me call it, has ſpoiled all the three brothers.

'But you ſee, child,' proceeded my mother, 'what a different behaviour 'MINE is to YOU. I recommend to 'you one of the ſobereſt, yet politeſt, 'men in England.'

I think little of my mother's *politeſt*, my dear. She judges of honeſt Hickman for her *daughter*, as ſhe would have done, I ſuppoſe, twenty years ago, for *herſelf*.

'Of a good family,' continued my mother; 'a fine, clear, and improving 'eſtate;' [a prime conſideration with my mother, as well as with ſome other folks, whom you know] 'and I *beg* 'and I *pray* you to encourage him: at 'leaſt, not to uſe him the *worſe*, for 'his being ſo obſequious to you.'

Yes indeed! To uſe *him* kindly, that he may treat *me* familiarly—But diſtance to the men-wretches is beſt—I ſay.

'Yet all will hardly prevail upon 'you to do as I would have you. What 'would you ſay, were I to treat you 'as Miſs Harlowe's father and mother 'treat her?'

'What would I *ſay*, Madam?—'That's eaſily anſwered. I would *ſay* 'nothing. Can you think ſuch uſage, 'and to ſuch a young lady, is to be 'borne?'

'Come, come, Nancy, be not ſo 'haſty: you have heard but one ſide; 'and that there is *more* to be ſaid is 'plain, by your reading to me but 'parts of her letters. They are her 'parents. *They* muſt know beſt. Miſs 'Harlowe, as fine a child as ſhe is, 'muſt have *done* ſomething, muſt have '*ſaid* ſomething, (you know how they 'loved her) to make them treat her 'thus.'

'But if *ſhe* ſhould be blameleſs, Ma-'dam, how does your own ſuppoſition 'condemn *them?*'

Then came up Solmes's great eſtate; his good management of it—'A little 'too NEAR indeed!' was the word.—['*O how money-lovers*,' thought I, '*will palliate!*' Yet my mother is a princeſs in ſpirit to this Solmes!] 'What ſtrange effects,' added ſhe, 'have prepoſſeſſion and love upon young 'ladies?'

I don't know how it is, my dear; but people take high delight in finding out folks

folks in love. Curiosity *begets* curiosity: I believe that's the thing.

She proceeded to praise Mr. Lovelace's person, and his qualifications natural and acquired: but then she would judge as *mothers* will judge, and as *daughters* are very loth to judge:—but could say nothing in answer to your offer of living single; and breaking with him—if—if—[three or four *if's* she made of one good one, if] *that* could be depended on.

But still *obedience without reserve*, reason what I will, is the burden of my mother's song: and this, for *my* sake, as well as for *yours*.

I must needs say, that I think duty to parents is a very meritorious excellence: but I bless God I have not your trials. We can all be good when we have no temptation nor provocation to the contrary: but few young persons (who can help themselves too as you can) would bear what you bear.

I will now mention all that is upon my mind, in relation to the behaviour of your father and uncles, *and the rest of them*, because I would not offend you: but I have now a higher opinion of my own sagacity, than ever I had, in that I could never cordially love any one of your family but yourself. I am not *born* to like them. But it is my *duty* to be sincere to my *friends*: and this will excuse her Anna Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

I ought indeed to have excepted your mother; a lady to be reverenced; and now to be pitied. What must have been her treatment, to be thus subjugated, as I may call it? Little did the good old viscount think, when he married his darling, his only daughter to so well-appearing a gentleman, and to her own liking too, that she would have been so much kept down. Another would call your father a tyrant, if I must not: all the world that know him, *do* call him so; and if you love your mother, you should not be very angry at the world for taking that liberty.

Yet, after all, I cannot help thinking, that she is the less to be pitied, as she may be said (be the gout, or what will, the occasion of his moroseness) to have long behaved unworthy of her birth and fine qualities, in yielding so much as she yields to encroaching spirits; [You may confine the reflection to your brother, if it will pain you to extend it] and this for the sake of preserving a temporary peace to herself; which was the less worth endeavouring to preserve, as it always produced a strength in the will of others, and was followed by a weakness in her own, which subjected her to an arbitrariness that of course grew, and became established, upon her patience.—And now to give up the most deserving of her children (against her judgment) a sacrifice to the ambition and selfishness of the least deserving!—But I fly from this subject—having, I fear, said too much to be forgiven—and yet much less than is in my heart to say upon the over-meek subject.

Mr. Hickman is expected from London this evening. I have desired him to enquire after Lovelace's life and conversation in town. If he has not enquired, I shall be very angry with him. Don't expect a very good account of either. He is certainly an intriguing wretch, and full of inventions.

Upon my word, I most heartily despise that sex! I wish they would let our fathers and mothers alone; teazing *them* to teaze *us* with their golden promises, and protestations, and settlements, and the rest of their ostentatious nonsense. How charmingly might you and I live together, and despise them all!—But to be cajoled, wire-drawn, and ensnared, like silly birds, into a state of bondage, or vile subordination: to be courted as princesses for a few weeks, in order to be treated as slaves for the rest of our lives—Indeed, my dear, as you say of Solmes, I cannot endure them! But for your relations [*friends* no more will I call them, unworthy as they are even of the *other* name!] to take such a wretch's price as that; and to the cutting off all reversions from his own family!—How must a mind but commonly just resist such a measure!

Mr. Hickman shall sound Lord M. upon the subject you recommend. But beforehand I can tell you what he and what his sister will say, when they *are* sounded. Who would not be proud of such a relation as Miss Clarissa Harlowe?—Mrs. Fortescue told me, that they are all your very great admirers.

If I have not been clear enough in my advice about what you shall do, let me say, that I can give it in one word: it is only by re-urging you to

RESUME. If you do, all the reſt will follow.

We are told here, that Mrs. Norton, as well as your aunt Hervey, has given her opinion on the *implicit* ſide of the queſtion. If ſhe can think, that the part ſhe has had in your education, and your own admirable talents and acquirements, are to be thrown away upon ſuch a worthleſs creature as Solmes, I could heartily quarrel with her. You may think I ſay this to leſſen your regard for the good woman. And perhaps not wholly without cauſe, if you do. For, to own the truth, methinks, I don't love her ſo well as I ſhould do, did you love her ſo apparently leſs, that I could be out of doubt, that you love me better.

Your mother tells you, That you will have great trials: that you are under your father's *diſcipline*.—The word is enough for me to deſpiſe them who give occaſion for it's uſe.—That it is out of her power to help you! And again, that if you have any favour to hope for, it muſt be by the mediation of your uncles. I ſuppoſe you will write to the oddities, ſince you are forbid to ſee them—But can it be, that ſuch a lady, ſuch a ſiſter, ſuch a wife, ſuch a mother, has no influence in her own family? Who, indeed, as you ſay, if this be ſo, would marry, that can live ſingle? My choler is again beginning to riſe. RESUME, my dear:—and that is all I will give myſelf time to ſay further, leſt I offend you when I cannot ſerve you.—Only this, that I am *your truly affectionate friend and ſervant*,

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XXVIII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

FRIDAY, MARCH 10.

YOU will permit me, my dear, to touch upon a few paſſages in your laſt letter, that affect me ſenſibly.

In the firſt place, you muſt allow me to ſay, low as I am in ſpirits, that I am very angry with you for your reflections on my relations, particularly on my father and mother, and on the memory of my grandfather. Nor, my dear, does your *own* mother always eſcape the keen edge of your vivacity. One cannot one's *ſelf* forbear to write or ſpeak freely of thoſe we love and honour, when grief from imagined hard treatment wrings the heart: but it goes againſt one to hear any-body elſe take the ſame liberties. Then you have ſo very ſtong a manner of expreſſion where you take a diſtaſte, that when paſſion has ſubſided, and I come (upon reflection) to ſee by *your* ſeverity what I have given occaſion for, I cannot help condemning myſelf.

But leaſt of all can I bear that you ſhould reflect upon my mother. What, my dear, if her meekneſs ſhould not be rewarded? Is the want of reward, or the want even of a grateful acknowledgment, a reaſon for us to diſpenſe with what we think our duty? They were my father's lively ſpirits that firſt made him an intereſt in her gentle boſom. They were the ſame ſpirits turned inward, as I have heretofore obſerved *, that made him ſo impatient when the cruel malady ſeized him. He always loved my mother: and would not LOVE and PITY, *excuſably*, nay, *laudably*, make a good wife (who was an hourly witneſs of his pangs, when labouring under a paroxyſm, and his paroxyſms becoming more and more frequent, as well as more and more ſevere) give up her own will, her own likings, to oblige a huſband, thus afflicted, whoſe love for *her* was unqueſtionable?—And if ſo, was it not too natural, [human nature is not perfect, my dear] that the huſband thus humoured by the wife, ſhould be unable to bear controul from any-body elſe? much leſs contradiction from his children?

If then you would avoid my higheſt diſpleaſure, you muſt ſpare my mother: and, ſurely, you will allow me, with her, to pity, as well as to love and honour my father.

I have no friend but you to whom I can appeal, to whom I dare complain. Unhappily circumſtanced as I am, it is but too probable that I *ſhall* complain, becauſe it is but too probable that I ſhall have more and more cauſe given me *for*

* See Page 20.

complaint.

complaint. But be it your part, if I do, to soothe my angry passions, and to soften my resentments; and this the rather, as you know what an influence your advice has upon me; and as you *must* also know, that the freedoms you take with my friends, can have no other tendency but to weaken the sense of my duty to them, without answering any good end to myself.

I cannot help owning, however, that I am pleased to have you join with me in opinion of the contempt which Solmes deserves from me. But yet, permit me to say, that he is not *quite* so horrible a creature as you make him: as to his *person*, I mean; for with regard to his *mind*, by all I have heard, you have done him but justice: but you have such a talent at an ugly likeness, and such a vivacity, that they sometimes carry you out of verisimilitude. In short, my dear, I have known you, in more instances than one, sit down resolved to write all that wit, rather than strict justice, could suggest upon the given occasion. Perhaps it may be thought, that I should say the less on this particular subject, because your dislike of him arises from love to me: but should it not be our aim to judge of ourselves, and of every-thing that affects us, as we may reasonably imagine other people would judge of us, and of our actions?

As to the advice you give, to resume my estate, I am determined not to litigate with my father, let what will be the consequence to myself. I may give you, at another time, a more particular answer to your reasonings on this subject: but, at present, will only observe, that it is my opinion, that Lovelace himself would hardly think me worth addressing, were he to know *this* to be my resolution. These *men*, my dear, with all their flatteries, look forward to the PERMANENT. Indeed, it is fit they should. For love must be a very foolish thing to look back upon, when it has brought persons born to affluence into indigence, and laid a generous mind under obligation and dependence.

You very ingeniously account for the love we bear to one another, from the *difference* in our tempers. I own I should not have thought of that. There may possibly be something in it: but whether there be, or not, whenever I am cool, and give myself time to reflect, I will love you the better for the correction you give me, be as severe as you will upon me. Spare me not therefore, my dear friend, whenever you think me in the least faulty. I love your agreeable raillery: you know I always did; nor, however *over*-serious you think me, did I ever think you *flippant*, as you harshly call it. One of the first conditions of our mutual friendship was, that each should say or write to the other whatever was upon her mind, without any offence to be taken: a condition that is indeed indispensable in friendship.

I know your mother would be for implicit obedience in a child. I am sorry my case is so circumstanced, that I *cannot* comply. It would be my duty to do so, if I could. You are indeed very happy, that you have nothing but your own agreeable, yet whimsical, humours to contend with, in the choice she invites you to make of Mr. Hickman. How happy should I be, to be treated with so much lenity!—I should blush to have *my* mother say, that she *begged* and *prayed* me, and all in vain, to encourage a man so unexceptionable as Mr. Hickman.

Indeed, my beloved Miss Howe, I am ashamed to have your mother say, with ME in her view, What strange effects have prepossession and love upon young creatures of our sex! This touches me the more sensibly, because you yourself, my dear, are so ready to *persuade* me into it.

I should be very blameable to endeavour to hide any the least bias upon my mind from you: and I cannot but say—that this man—this Lovelace—is a man that might be liked well enough, if he bore such a character as Mr. Hickman bears; and even if there were hopes of reclaiming him. And further still I will acknowledge, that I believe it possible that one might be driven, by violent measures, step by step, as it were, into something that might be called—I do not know what to call it—A *conditional kind of liking*, or so. But as to the word LOVE—justifiable and charming as it is in some cases, (that is to say, in all the *relative*, in all the *social*, and, what is still beyond *both*, in all our *superior* duties, in which it may be properly called *divine*;) it has, methinks, in the narrow, circumscribed, selfish, peculiar

peculiar ſenſe, in which you apply it to me, (the man too ſo little to be approved of for his morals, if all that report ſays of him be true) no pretty ſound with it. Treat me as freely as you will in all other reſpects, I will love you, as I have ſaid, the better for your friendly freedom: but, methinks, that I could be glad that you would not let this imputation paſs ſo glibly from *your* pen, or *your* lips, as attributable to one of your *own ſex*, whether *I* be the perſon or not: ſince the *other* muſt have a *double* triumph, when a perſon of your delicacy (armed with ſuch contempts of them all, as you would have one think) can give up a friend, with an exultation over her weakneſs, as a ſilly, love-ſick creature!

I could make ſome other obſervations upon the contents of your laſt two letters; but my mind is not free enough at preſent. The occaſions for the above ſtuck with me; and I could not help taking the earlieſt notice of them.

Having written to the end of my ſecond ſheet, I will cloſe this letter, and in my next acquaint you with all that has happened here ſince my laſt.

LETTER XXIX.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

SATURDAY, MARCH 11.

I Have had ſuch taunting meſſages, and ſuch repeated avowals of ill offices, brought me from my brother and ſiſter, if I do not comply with their wills, (delivered, too, with provoking ſaucineſs by Betty Barnes) that I have thought it proper, before I entered upon my intended addreſs to my uncles, in purſuance of the hint given me in my mother's letter, to expoſtulate a little with *them*. But I have done it in ſuch a manner as will give you (if you pleaſe to take it as you have done ſome parts of my former letters) great advantage over me. In ſhort, you will have more cauſe than ever to declare me far gone in love, if my *reaſons* for the change of my ſtile in theſe letters, with regard to Mr. Lovelace, do not engage your more favourable opinion.—For I have thought proper to give them their own way; and, ſince they will have it that I have a preferable regard for Mr. Lovelace, I give them cauſe rather to confirm their opinion than doubt it.

Theſe are my reaſons in brief, for the alteration of my ſtile.

In the firſt place, they have grounded their principal argument for my compliance with their will, upon my acknowledgment that my heart is free; and ſo, ſuppoſing I give up no preferable perſon, my oppoſition has the look of downright obſtinacy in their eyes; and they argue, that, at worſt, my averſion to Solmes is an averſion that may be eaſily ſurmounted, and *ought* to be ſurmounted in duty to my father, and for the promotion of family-views.

Next, although they build upon this argument in order to ſilence me, they ſeem not to believe me, but treat me as diſgracefully as if I were in love with one of my father's footmen—ſo that my *conditional* willingneſs to give up Mr. Lovelace has procured me no favour.

In the next place, I cannot but think, that my brother's antipathy to Mr. Lovelace is far from being well grounded: the man's inordinate paſſion for the ſex is the crime that is always rung in my ears; and a very great one it is; but, does my brother recriminate upon him thus in love to *me?*—No—His whole behaviour ſhews me, that that is not his principal motive, and that he thinks me rather in his way than otherwiſe.

It is then the call of juſtice, as I may ſay, to ſpeak a little in favour of a man, who, although provoked by my brother, did not do him all the miſchief he could have done him, and which my brother had endeavoured to do *him*. It might not be amiſs, therefore, I thought, to alarm them a little with an apprehenſion, that the methods they are a taking with me are the very reverſe of thoſe they *ſhould* take to anſwer the end they deſign by them. And after all, what is the compliment I make Mr. Lovelace, if I *allow* it to be thought that I do *really* prefer him to ſuch a man as him they terrify me with? Then, my Miſs Howe [concluded I] accuſes me of a tameneſs which ſubjects me to inſults from my brother: I will keep that dear friend in my eye; and for *all* theſe conſiderations, try what a little of *her* ſpirit will do—ſit it ever ſo awkwardly upon me.

In this way of thinking, I wrote to my

my brother and sister. This is my letter to him.

'TREATED as I am treated, and, 'in a great measure, if not *wholly*, 'by *your* instigations, brother, you 'must permit me to expostulate with 'you upon the occasion. It is not my '*intention* to displease you in what I am 'going to write: and yet I must deal 'freely with you. The occasion calls 'for it.

'And permit me, in the first place, 'to remind you, That I am your *sister*; 'and not your *servant*; and that, there-'fore, the bitter revilings and passion-'ate language brought me from you, 'upon an occasion in which you have 'no reason to prescribe to me, are nei-'ther worthy of my character to bear, 'nor of yours to offer.

'Put the case, that I *were* to marry 'the man you dislike; and that he were '*not* to make a polite or tender husband, 'is that a reason for you to be an un-'polite and disobliging brother?—Why 'must you, Sir, anticipate my misfor-'tunes, were such a case to happen?— 'Let me tell you plainly, that the man 'who could treat me as a *wife*, worse 'than you of late have treated me as a '*sister*, must be a barbarous man in-'deed.

'Ask yourself, I pray you, Sir, if 'you would thus have treated your sister 'Bella, had *she* thought fit to receive the 'addresses of the man so much hated 'by you?—If not, let me caution you, 'my brother, not to take your measures 'by what you think *will be borne*, but 'rather by what *ought to be offered*.

'How would *you* take it, if you had 'a brother, who, in a like case, were to 'act by *you*, as you do by *me*?—You 'cannot but remember what a laconick 'answer you gave even to my father, 'who recommended to you Miss Nelly 'D'Oily—*You did not like her*, were 'your words: and that was thought 'sufficient.

'You must needs think that I cannot 'but know to *whom* to attribute my 'disgraces, when I recollect my father's 'indulgence to me, in permitting me 'to decline several offers; and to *whom* 'that a common cause is endeavoured 'to be made, in favour of a man whose 'person and manners are more except-'ionable than those of any of the gen-'tlemen I have been permitted to refuse.

'I offer not to compare the two men 'together: nor is there, indeed, the least 'comparison to be made between them. 'All the difference to the *one's* disad-'vantage, if I *did*, is but in one point— 'Of the greatest importance, indeed— 'But to whom of *most* importance? '—To *myself*, surely, were I to encou-'rage his application—of the least to '*you*. Nevertheless, if you do not, by 'your strange politicks, unite *that man* 'and *me* as joint-sufferers in one cause, 'you shall find me as much resolved 'to renounce *him*, as I am to refuse the '*other*. I have made an overture to 'this purpose: I hope you will not give 'me reason to confirm my apprehen-'sions, that it will be owing to *you* if 'it be not accepted.

'It is a sad thing to have it to say, 'without being conscious of ever hav-'ing given you cause of offence, that 'I have in *you* a brother, but not a 'friend.

'Perhaps you will not condescend to 'enter into the reasons of your late and 'present conduct with a foolish sister. 'But if *politeness*, if *civility*, be not due 'to that character, and to my sex, *jus-'tice* is.

'Let me take the liberty further to 'observe, that the principal end of a 'young man's education at the uni-'versity, is, to learn him to reason 'justly, and to subdue the violence of 'his passions. I hope, brother, that 'you will not give room for any-body 'who knows us both, to conclude, that 'the toilette has taught the *one* more of 'the latter doctrine, than the university 'has taught the *other*. I am truly sor-'ry to have cause to say, that I have 'heard it often remarked, that your un-'controuled passions are not a credit to 'your liberal education.

'I hope, Sir, that you will excuse 'the freedom I have taken with you: 'you have given me too much reason 'for it, and you have taken much 'greater with me, *without* reason—so, 'if you are offended, ought to look at 'the cause, and not at the effect—Then 'examining yourself, that cause will 'cease, and there will not be any-where 'a more accomplished gentleman than 'my brother.

'Sisterly affection, I do assure you, 'Sir, (unkindly as you have used *me*) 'and not the pertness which of late you 'have been so apt to impute to me, is

'my motive in this hint, 'Let me in-
'voke your returning kindneſs, my
'*only brother!* And give me cauſe, I
'beſeech you, to call you my *compaſ-*
'*ſionating friend.* For I am, and ever
'will be, *your affectionate ſiſter*,

'CLARISSA HARLOWE.'

This is my brother's anſwer.

'TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

'I Know there will be no end of your
'impertinent ſcribble, if I do not
'write to you. I write therefore: but,
'without entering into argument with
'ſuch a conceited and pert preacher
'and queſtioner, it is, to forbid you to
'plague me with your quaint nonſenſe.
'I know not what wit in a woman is
'good for, but to make her over-value
'herſelf, and deſpiſe every other per-
'ſon. Yours, Miſs Pert, has ſet you
'above your duty, and above being
'taught or preſcribed to, either by pa-
'rents, or any-body elſe—But go on,
'Miſs: your mortification will be the
'greater; that is all, child. It *ſhall*, I
'aſſure you, if I can make it ſo, ſo long
'as you prefer that villainous Lovelace
'(who is juſtly hated by all your fa-
'mily) to every-body. We ſee by your
'letter now,' (what we too juſtly ſu-
'ſpected before) moſt evidently we ſee,
'the hold he has got of your forward
'heart. But the ſtronger the hold, the
'greater muſt be the force (and you
'ſhall have enough of that) to tear ſuch
'a miſcreant from it. In me, notwith-
'ſtanding your ſaucy lecturing, and
'your ſaucy reflections before, you are
'ſure of a friend, as well as of a bro-
'ther, if it be not your own fault. But
'if you will ſtill think of ſuch a wretch
'as that Lovelace, never expect either
'friend or brother in

'JA. HARLOWE.'

I will now give you a copy of my let-
ter to my ſiſter, with her anſwer.

'IN what, my dear ſiſter, have I of-
'fended you, that inſtead of en-
'deavouring to ſoften my father's an-
'ger againſt me, (as I am ſure I ſhould
'have done for you, had my unhappy
'caſe been yours) you ſhould, in ſo
'hard-hearted a manner, join to aggra-
'vate not only *his* diſpleaſure, but my
'mother's againſt me. Make but my
'caſe your own, my dear Bella; and
'ſuppoſe you were commanded to marry
'Mr. Lovelace, (to whom you are be-
'lieved to have an antipathy) would
'you not think it a very grievous in-
'junction?—Yet cannot your diſlike to
'Mr. *Lovelace* be greater than mine is
'to Mr. *Solmes*. Nor are love and ha-
'tred voluntary paſſions.

'My brother may perhaps think it a
'proof of a *manly* ſpirit, to ſhew him-
'ſelf an utter ſtranger to the gentle paſ-
'ſions. We have both heard him boaſt,
'that he never loved with diſtinction;
'and, having predominating paſſions,
'and checked in his firſt attempt per-
'haps he never will. It is the leſs won-
'der then, raw from the college, ſo
'lately himſelf the *tutored*, that he
'ſhould ſet up for a tutor, a preſcriber
'to our gentler ſex, whoſe taſtes and
'manners are differently formed; for
'what, according to his account, are
'colleges, but claſſes of tyrants, from
'the upper-ſtudents over the lower, and
'from them to the tutor?—That *he*,
'with ſuch *maſculine* paſſions, ſhould
'endeavour to controul and bear down
'an unhappy ſiſter, in a caſe where his
'antipathy, and, give me leave to ſay,
'his ambition, [Once you would have
'allowed the latter to be his fault] can
'be gratified by ſo doing, may not be
'quite ſo much to be wondered at—
'But that a ſiſter ſhould give up the
'cauſe of a ſiſter, and join with him
'to ſet her father and mother againſt
'her, in a caſe that might have been
'her own—Indeed, my Bella, this is
'not pretty in you.

'There *was* a time that Mr. Love-
'lace was thought reclaimable, and
'when it was far from being deemed a
'cenſurable view to hope to bring back
'to the paths of virtue and honour, a
'man of his ſenſe and underſtanding.
'I am far from wiſhing to make the
'experiment: but, nevertheleſs, will
'ſay, that if I have *not* a regard for him,
'the diſgraceful methods taken to com-
'pel me to receive the addreſſes of ſuch
'a man as Mr. Solmes, are enough to
'induce it.

'Do you, my ſiſter, for one moment,
'lay aſide all prejudice, and compare
'the two men in their births, their edu-
'cations, their perſons, their under-
'ſtandings, their manners, their air,

'and

'and their whole deportments; and in 'their fortunes too, taking in reversions; and then judge of both: yet, as 'I have frequently offered, I will live 'single with all my heart, if that will 'do.

'I cannot thus live in displeasure and disgrace. I would, if I could, oblige 'all my friends. But will it be *just*, 'will it be *honest*, to marry a man I cannot endure? If I have not been used 'to oppose the will of my father, but 'have always delighted to oblige and 'obey, judge of the strength of my 'antipathy, by the painful opposition 'I am obliged to make, and cannot 'help it.

'Pity, then, my dearest Bella, my 'sister, my friend, my companion, my 'adviser, as you used to be when I was 'happy, and plead for *your ever-affectionate*

'CL. HARLOWE.'

'TO MISS CLARY HARLOWE.

'LET it be pretty or not pretty in 'your wife opinion, I shall speak 'my mind, I will assure you, both of 'you and your conduct in relation to 'this detested Lovelace. You are a 'fond foolish girl with all your wisdom. Your letter shews *that* enough 'in twenty places. And as to your 'cant of living single, nobody will believe you. This is one of your *fetches* 'to avoid complying with your duty, 'and the will of the most indulgent 'parents in the world, as yours have 'been to you, I am sure—Though now 'they see themselves finely requited 'for it.

'We all, indeed, once thought your 'temper soft and amiable: but why was 'it? You never was contradicted before. You had always your own 'way. But no sooner do you meet with 'opposition in your wishes to throw 'yourself away upon a vile rake, but 'you shew what you are. You cannot 'love Mr. Solmes! that is the pretence: 'but, sister, sister, let me tell you, that 'is because Lovelace has got into your 'fond heart—A wretch hated, justly 'hated, by us all; and who has dipped 'his hands in the blood of your brother: yet *him* you would make our 'relation, would you?

'I have no patience with you, but 'for putting the case of my liking such 'a vile wretch as him. As to the encouragement you pretended he received formerly from all our family, 'it was before we knew him to be so 'vile: and the proofs that had such 'force upon *us*, ought to have had some 'upon *you*—And *would*, had you not 'been a foolish forward girl; as on this 'occasion every-body sees you are.

'O how you run out in favour of 'the wretch!—His birth, his education, 'his person, his understanding, his 'manners, his air, his fortune—Reversions too taken in to augment the surfeiting catalogue! What a fond string 'of love-sick praises is here! And yet 'you would live single—Yes, I warrant!—when so many imaginary perfections dance before your dazzled 'eye!—But no more—I only desire, 'that you will not, while you seem to 'have such an opinion of your wit, 'think every-one else a fool; and that 'you can at pleasure, by your whining 'flourishes, make us all dance after 'your lead.

'Write as often as you will, this 'shall be the last answer or notice you 'shall have upon this subject from

'ARABELLA HARLOWE.'

I had in readiness a letter for each of my uncles; and meeting in the garden a servant of my uncle Harlowe, I gave them to him to deliver according to their respective directions. If I am to form a judgment by the answers I have received from my brother and sister, as above, I must not, I doubt, expect any good from those letters. But when I have tried every expedient, I shall have the less to blame myself for, if anything unhappy should fall out. I will send you copies of both, when I shall see what notice they will be thought worthy of, if of any.

LETTER XXX.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

SUNDAY NIGHT, MARCH 12.

THIS man, this Lovelace, gives me great uneasiness. He is extremely bold and rash. He was this afternoon at our church—In hopes to see

me, I suppose: and yet, if he had such hopes, his usual intelligence must have failed him.

Shorey was at church; and a principal part of her observation was upon his haughty and proud behaviour when he turned round in the pew where he sat to our family-pew. My father and both my uncles were there; so were my mother and sister. My brother happily was not.—They all came home in disorder. Nor did the congregation mind anybody but him; it being his first appearance there, since the unhappy rencounter.

What did the man come for, if he intended to look challenge and defiance, as Shorey says he did, and as others, it seems, thought he did, as well as she? Did he come for *my* sake; and, by behaving in such a manner to those present of my family, imagine he was doing me either service or pleasure?—He knows how they hate him: nor will he take pains, would pains do, to obviate their hatred.

You and I, my dear, have often taken notice of his pride; and you have railled him upon it; and instead of exculpating himself, he has owned it: and by owning it he has thought he has done enough.

For my own part, I thought pride in his case an improper subject for raillery.—People of birth and fortune to be proud, is so needless, so mean a vice!—If they *deserve* respect, they will have it, without requiring it. In other words, for persons to endeavour to gain respect by a haughty behaviour, is to give a proof that they mistrust their own merit: to make confession that they *know* that their *actions* will not attract it.—Distinction or quality may be prided in by those to whom distinction or quality is a *new* thing. And then the reflection and contempt which such bring upon themselves by it, is a counter-balance.

Such added advantages, too, as this man has in his person and mien: learned also, as they say he is—*Such* a man to be haughty, to be imperious!—The lines of his own face at the same time condemning him—how wholly inexcusable!—Proud of what? Not of doing well: the only *justifiable* pride.—Proud of *exterior* advantages!—Must not one be led by such a *flop short* pride, as I may call it, in him or her who has it, to mistrust the *interior?* Some people may indeed be afraid, that if they did not assume, they would be trampled upon. A very narrow fear, however, since they trample upon themselves, who can fear *this*. But this man must be secure, that humility would be an ornament to him.

He has talents indeed: but those talents and his personal advantages have been snares to him. It is plain they have. And this shews, that, weighed in an equal balance, he would be found greatly wanting.

Had my friends confided as they did at first, in that discretion which they do not accuse me of being defective in, I dare say I should have found him out: and then should have been as resolute to dismiss *him*, as I was to dismiss others, and as I *am* never to have Mr. *Solmes*. O that they did but know my heart!—It shall sooner burst, than voluntarily, uncompelled, undriven, dictate a measure that shall cast a slur either upon them, or upon my sex.

Excuse me, my dear friend, for these grave *soliloquies*, as I may call them. How have I run from reflection to reflection!—But the occasion is recent—They are all in commotion below upon it.

Shorey says, that Mr. Lovelace watched my mother's eye, and bowed to her: and she returned the compliment. He always admired my mother. She would not, I believe, have hated *him*, had she not been *bid* to hate him; and had it not been for the rencounter between him and her only son.

Doctor Lewen was at church; and observing, as every-one else did, the disorder into which Mr. Lovelace's appearance had put all our family, was so good as to engage him in conversation, when the service was over, till they were all gone to their coaches.

My uncles had my letters in the morning. They, as well as my father, are more and more incensed against me, it seems. Their answers, if they vouchsafe to answer me, will demonstrate, I doubt not, the unseasonableness of this rash man's presence at our church.

They are angry also, as I understand, with my mother, for returning his compliment. What an enemy is hatred, even to the common forms of civility! which, however, more distinguish the *payer* of a compliment, than the *receiver*. But they all see, they say, that there is but one way to put an end to his insults. So I shall

shall suffer; and in what will the rash man have benefited himself, or mended his prospects?

I am extremely apprehensive that this worse than ghost-like appearance of his, bodes some still bolder step. If he come hither, (and very desirous he is of my leave to come) I am afraid there will be murder. To avoid that, if there were no other way, I would most willingly be buried alive.

They are all in consultation—Upon my letters, I suppose—So they were in the morning; which occasioned my uncles to be at our church. I will send you the copies of those letters, as I promised in my last, when I see whether I can give you their answers with them. This letter is all—I cannot tell what—the effect of apprehension and displeasure at the man who has occasioned my apprehensions. Six lines would have contained all that is in it to the purpose of my story.

CL. H.

See page 95, for Mr. Lovelace's account of his behaviour and intentions in his appearance at their church.

LETTER XXXI.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

MONDAY, MARCH 13.

IN vain dost thou* and thy compeers press me to go to town, while I am in such an uncertainty as I am in at present with this proud beauty. All the ground I have hitherto gained with her, is entirely owing to her concern for the safety of people whom I have reason to hate.

Write, then, thou biddest me, if I will not come. That, indeed, I can do; and as well without a subject, as with one. And what follows shall be a proof of it.

The lady's malevolent brother has now, as I told thee at M. Hall, introduced another man; the most unpromising in his person and qualities, the most formidable in his offers, that has yet appeared.

This man has by his proposals captivated every soul of the Harlowes—*Soul!* did I say—There is not a soul among them but my charmer's; and she, withstanding them all, is actually confined, and otherwise maltreated by a father the most gloomy and positive; at the instigation of a brother the most arrogant and selfish—But thou knowest their characters; and I will not therefore sully my paper with them.

But is it not a confounded thing to be in love with one who is the daughter, the sister, the niece, of a family I must eternally despise? And, the devil of it, that love increasing, with her—what shall I call it?—It is not scorn—It is not pride—It is not the insolence of an adored beauty—But it is to *virtue*, it seems, that my difficulties are owing; and I pay for not being a sly sinner, an hypocrite; for being regardless of my reputation; for permitting slander to open it's mouth against me. But is it necessary for such a one as I, who have been used to carry all before me, upon my own terms—I, who never inspired a fear, that had not a discernibly-predominant mixture of love in it; to be an hypocrite?—Well says the poet—

'He who seems virtuous does but act a part;
'And shews not his own nature, but his art.'

Well, but it seems I must *practise* for this art, if I would succeed with this truly admirable creature! But why *practise* for it?—Cannot I *indeed* reform?—I have but *one* vice—Have I, Jack?—Thou knowest my heart, if any man living does. As far as I know it myself, thou knowest it. But it is a cursed deceiver; for it has many and many a time imposed upon it's master—*Master*, did I say? That am I not now; nor have I been from the moment I beheld this angel of a woman. Prepared, indeed, as I was by her character before I saw her: for what a mind must that be, which though not virtuous itself, admires not virtue in another?—My visit to Arabella, owing to a mistake of the sisters, into which, as thou hast heard me say, I was led by the blundering uncle; who was to introduce *me* (but lately come from abroad) to the *divi-*

* These gentlemen affected what they called the Roman stile (to wit, the *thee* and the *thou*) in their letters: and it was an agreed rule with them, to take in good part whatever freedoms they treated each other with, if the passages were written in that stile.

nity,

nity. as I thought; but, instead of her, carried me to a *mere mortal*. And much difficulty had I, so fond and forward my lady! to get off without forfeiting all with a family that I intended should give me a goddess.

I have boasted, that I was once in love before—And indeed I thought I was. It was in my early manhood—with that quality-jilt, whose infidelity I have vowed to revenge upon as many of the sex as shall come into my power. I believe, in different climes, I have already sacrificed an Hecatomb to my Nemesis, in pursuance of this vow. But upon recollecting what I was *then*, and comparing it with what I find myself *now*, I cannot say that I was ever in love before.

What was it then, dost thou ask me, since the disappointment had such effects upon me, when I found myself jilted, that I was hardly kept in my senses?—Why, I'll tell thee what, as near as I can remember; for it was a great while ago:—It was—Egad, Jack, I can hardly tell what it was—But a vehement aspiration after a novelty, I think—Those confounded poets, with their terrenely-celestial descriptions, did as much with me as the lady: they fired my imagination, and set me upon a desire to become a goddess-maker. I must needs try my new-fledged pinions in sonnet, elogy, and madrigal. I must have a Cynthia, a Stella, a Sachariſſa, as well as the best of them: darts, and flames, and the devil knows what, must I give to my Cupid. I must create beauty, and place it where nobody else could find it: and many a time have I been at a loss for a *subject*, when my new-created goddess has been kinder than it was proper for my plaintive sonnet that she should be.

Then I had a vanity of *another* sort in my passion: I found myself well received among the women in general; and I thought it a pretty *lady-like* tyranny [I was then very young, and very vain!] to single out some *one* of the sex, to make *half a score* jealous. And I can tell thee, it had it's effect: for many an eye have I made to sparkle with rival indignation; many a cheek glow; and even many a fan have I caused to be snapped at a fitter-beauty; accompanied with a reflection perhaps at being seen alone with a wild young fellow who could not be in private with both at once.

In short, Jack, it was more pride than love, as I now find it, that put me upon making such a confounded rout about losing this noble varletess. I thought she loved me at least as well as I believed I loved her: nay, I had the vanity to suppose she could not help it. My friends were pleased with my choice. They wanted me to be shackled: for early did they doubt my morals as to the sex. They saw, that the dancing, the singing, the musical ladies were all fond of my company: for who [I am in a humour to be vain, I think!—for who] danced, who sung, who touched the string, whatever the instrument, with a better grace than thy friend?

I have no notion of playing the hypocrite so egregiously, as to pretend to be blind to qualifications which every one sees and acknowledges. Such praise-begging hypocrisy! Such affectedly disclaimed attributes: such contemptible praise-traps!—But yet, shall my vanity extend only to *personals*, such as the gracefulness of dress, my debonnaire, and my assurance—Self-taught, self-acquired, these!—For my *parts*, I value not myself upon *them*. Thou wilt say, I have no cause.—Perhaps not: but if I had any-thing valuable as to intellectuals, those are not my own; and to be proud of what a man is answerable for the abuse of, and has no merit in the right use of, is to strut, like the jay, in borrowed plumage.

But to return to my fair jilt—I could not bear, that a woman, who was the first that had bound me in silken fetters, [they were not iron ones, like those I now wear] should prefer a coronet to me: and when the bird was flown, I set more value upon it, than when I had it safe in my cage, and could visit it when I pleased.

But now am I *indeed* in love. I can think of nothing, of nobody, but the divine Clariſſa Harlowe—*Harlowe*—. How that hated word sticks in my throat—But I shall give her for it the name of Love *.

* Lovelace.

CLARISSA!

CLARISSA! O there's muſick in the name,
That, ſoft'ning me to infant tenderneſs,
Makes my heart ſpring like the firſt leaps of life!

But couldſt thou have believed that I, who think it poſſible for me to favour as much as I can be favoured; that I, who for this charming creature think of foregoing the *life of honour* for the *life of ſhackles*; could adopt thoſe over-tender lines of Otway?

I check myſelf, and leaving the three firſt lines of the following of Dryden to the family of the whiners, find the workings of the paſſion in my ſtormy ſoul better expreſſed by the three laſt.

'Love various minds does variouſly inſpire:
'He ſtirs in gentle natures gentle fires;
'Like that of incenſe on the altar laid.

'But raging flames tempeſtuous ſouls invade:
'A fire, which ev'ry windy paſſion blows;
'With pride it mounts, and with revenge it glows.'

And with REVENGE it *ſhall* glow! —For, doſt thou think, that if it were not from the hope, that this ſtupid family are all combined to do my work for me, I would bear their inſults?—Is it poſſible to imagine, that I would be braved as I am braved, threatened as I am threatened, by thoſe who are afraid to ſee me; and by this brutal brother too, to whom I gave a life, [a life, indeed, not worth my taking!] had I not a greater pride in knowing, that by means of his very ſpy upon me, I am playing him off as I pleaſe; cooling or inflaming his violent paſſions as may beſt ſuit my purpoſes; permitting ſo much to be revealed of my life and actions, and intentions, as may give him ſuch a confidence in his double-faced agent, as ſhall enable me to dance his employer upon my own wires?

This it is that makes my pride mount above my reſentment. By this engine, whoſe ſprings I am continually oiling, I play them all off. The buſy old tarpaulin uncle I make but my ambaſſador to Queen Annabella Howe, to engage her (for example-ſake to her princeſsly daughter) to join in their cauſe, and to aſſert an authority they are reſolved, right or wrong, (or I could do nothing) to maintain.

And what my motive, doſt thou aſk? No leſs than this, That my beloved ſhall find no protection out of my family; for, if I know *hers*, fly ſhe muſt, or have the man ſhe hates. This, therefore, if I take my meaſures right, and my familiar fail me not, will ſecure her mine, in ſpite of them all; in ſpite of her own inflexible heart: mine, without condition; without reformation promiſes; without the neceſſity of a ſiege of years, perhaps; and to be even then, after wearing the guiſe of a merit-doubting hypocriſy, at an uncertainty, upon a probation unapproved of—Then ſhall I have all the raſcals and raſcaleſſes of the family come creeping to me: I preſcribing to them; and bringing that ſordidly-imperious brother to kneel at the foot-ſtool of my throne.

All my fear ariſes from the little hold I have in the heart of this charming froſt-piece; ſuch a conſtant glow upon her lovely features; eyes ſo ſparkling; limbs ſo divinely turned; health ſo florid; youth ſo blooming; air ſo animated—To have an heart ſo impenetrable: and *I*, the hitherto ſucceſsful Lovelace, the addreſſer—How can it be? Yet there are people, and I have talked with ſome of them, who remember that ſhe was *born*. Her nurſe Norton boaſts of her maternal offices in her earlieſt infancy; and in her education *gradatim*. So that there is full proof, that ſhe came not from above all at once an angel! How then can ſhe be ſo impenetrable?

But here's her miſtake; nor will ſhe be cured of it—She takes the man ſhe calls her father; [her mother had been faultleſs, had ſhe not been her father's wife] ſhe takes the men ſhe calls her uncles; the fellow ſhe calls her brother; and the poor contemptible ſhe calls her ſiſter; to *be* her father, to *be* her uncles, her brother, her ſiſter; and that, as ſuch, ſhe owes to ſome of them reverence, to others reſpect, let them treat her ever ſo cruelly!—Sordid ties! —Mere cradle prejudices!—For had they not been impoſed upon her by Nature, when ſhe was in a perverſe humour, or could ſhe have choſen her relations, would any of *theſe* have been among them?

How my heart riſes at her preference of them to me, when ſhe is convinced of their injuſtice to me! Convinced, that the alliance would do honour to them all—herſelf excepted; to whom every one owes honour; and from whom the

moſt

most princely family might receive it. But how much more will my heart rise with indignation against her, if I find she hesitates but one moment (however persecuted) about preferring me to the man she avowedly hates! But she cannot surely be so mean as to purchase her peace with them at so dear a rate. She cannot give a sanction to projects formed in malice, and founded in a selfishness (and that at her own expence) which she has spirit enough to despise in others; and ought to disavow, that we may not think her a Harlowe.

By this incoherent ramble thou wilt gather, that I am not likely to come up in haste; since I must endeavour first to obtain some assurance from the beloved of my soul, that I shall not be sacrificed to such a wretch as Solmes! Woe be to the fair-one, if ever she be *driven* into my power, (for I despair of a voluntary impulse in my favour) and I find a difficulty in obtaining this security.

That her indifference to me is not owing to the superior liking she has for *any* other man, is what rivets my chains: but take care, fair-one; take care, O thou most exalted of female minds, and and loveliest of persons, how thou debasest thyself, by encouraging such a competition as thy sordid relations have set on foot in mere malice to me!—Thou wilt say I rave. And so I do—

'Perdition catch my soul, but I *do* love her!'

Else, could I bear the perpetual revilings of her implacable family?—*Else*, could I basely creep about—not her proud father's house—but his paddock—and garden-walls?—Yet (a quarter of a mile's distance between us) not hoping to behold the least glimpse of her shadow?—*Else*, should I think myself repaid, amply repaid, if the fourth, fifth, or sixth midnight stroll, through unfrequented paths, and over briery inclosures, affords me a few cold lines; the even *expected* purport only to let me know, that she values the most worthless person of her very worthless family, more than she values me; and that she would not write at all, but to induce me to bear insults, which *un-man* me to bear?—My lodging in the intermediate way, at a wretched alehouse; disguised like an inmate of it: accommodations equally vile, as those I met with in my Westphalian journey. It is well, that the necessity for all this arises not from scorn and tyranny! but is first imposed upon herself!

But was ever hero in romance (fighting with giants and dragons excepted) called upon to harder trials?—Fortune and family, and reversionary grandeur, on my side! Such a wretched fellow my competitor!—Must I not be deplorably in love, that can go through these difficulties, encounter these contempts?—By my soul, I am half-ashamed of myself: I, who am perjured too, by priority of obligation, if I am faithful to any woman in the world!

And yet, why say I, I am half-ashamed?—Is it not a glory to love *her* whom every-one who sees her, either loves, or reveres, or both? Dryden says—

'The cause of love can never be assign'd:
'Tis in no face—but in the lover's mind.'

—And Cowley thus addresses beauty as a mere imaginary—

'Beauty! thou wild fantastick ape,
'Who dost in ev'ry country change thy shape:
'Here black; there brown; here tawny; and
'there white;
'Thou flatt'rer! who comply'st with ev'ry
'sight!
'Who hast no certain what, nor where.'

But both these, had they been her cotemporaries, and known her, would have confessed themselves mistaken: and, taking together person, mind, and behaviour, would have acknowledged the *justice* of the universal voice in her favour.

——'Full many a lady
'I've ey'd with best regard; and many a time
'Th' harmony of their tongues hath into
'bondage
'Brought my too diligent ear. For *sev'ral*
'virtues
'Have I liked *sev'ral* women. Never any
'With so full soul, but some defect in her
'Did quarrel with the noblest grace she ow'd,
'And put it to the *foil*. But SHE!—O SHE!
'So perfect and so peerless is created,
'Of ev'ry creature's best.'

SHAKESP.

Thou art curious to know, if I have not started a new game?—If it be possible for so universal a lover to be confined so long to one object? Thou knowest

eſt nothing of this charming creature, that thou canſt put ſuch queſtions to me; or thinkeſt thou knoweſt me better than thou doſt. All that's excellent in her ſex is this lady!—Until by MATRIMONIAL, or EQUAL intimacies, I have found her *leſs than angel*, it is impoſſible to think of any other. Then there are ſo many ſtimulatives to ſuch a ſpirit as mine in this affair, *beſides* love: ſuch a field for ſtratagem and contrivance, which thou knoweſt to be the delight of my heart. Then the rewarding end of all!—To carry off ſuch a girl as this, in ſpite of all her watchful and implacable friends; and in ſpite of a prudence and reſerve that I never met with in any of the ſex:—What a triumph!—What a triumph over the whole ſex!—And then ſuch a revenge to gratify; which is only at preſent politically reined in, eventually to break forth with the greater fury—Is it poſſible, thinkeſt thou, that there can be room for a thought that is not *of* her, and devoted *to* her?

* *

BY the advices I have this moment received, I have reaſon to think, that I ſhall have occaſion for thee here. Hold thyſelf in readineſs to come down upon the firſt ſummons.

Let Belton, and Mowbray, and Tourville, likewiſe prepare themſelves, I have a great mind to contrive a method to ſend James Harlowe to travel for improvement. Never was there booby-ſquire that more wanted it. *Contrive* it, did I ſay? I have *already* contrived it; could I but put it in execution without being ſuſpected to have a hand in it. This I am reſolved upon; if I have not his *ſiſter*, I will have *him*.

But be this as it may, there is a preſent likelihood of room for *glorious* miſchief. A confederacy had been for *ſome time* formed againſt me; but the uncles and the nephew are *now* to be double-ſervanted; [*ſingle*-ſervanted they were before] and thoſe ſervants are to be *double*-armed when they attend their maſters abroad. This indicates their reſolute enmity to me, and as reſolute favour to Solmes.

The reinforced orders for this hoſtile apparatus are owing it ſeems to a viſit I made yeſterday to their church—A good place I thought to begin a reconciliation in; ſuppoſing the heads of the family to be chriſtians, and that they meant ſomething by their prayers. My hopes were to have an invitation (or, at leaſt, to gain a pretence) to accompany home the gloomy fire; and ſo get an opportunity to ſee my goddeſs: for I believed they durſt not but be *civil* to me, at leaſt. But they were filled with terror it ſeems at my entrance; a terror they could not get over. I ſaw it indeed in their countenances; and that they all expected ſomething extraordinary to follow.—And ſo it *ſhould* have done, had I been more ſure than I am of their daughter's favour. Yet not a hair of any of their ſtupid heads do I intend to hurt.

You ſhall all have your directions in writing, if there be occaſion. But after all, I dare ſay there will be no need but to ſhew your faces in my company.

Such faces never could four men ſhew—Mowbray's ſo fierce and ſo fighting; Belton's ſo pert and ſo pimply; Tourville's ſo fair-and ſo foppiſh; thine ſo rough and ſo reſolute: and *I* your leader!—What hearts, although meditating hoſtility, muſt thoſe be which we ſhall not appall?—Each man occaſionally attended by a ſervant or two, long ago choſen for qualities reſembling thoſe of his maſter.

Thus, Jack, as thou deſireſt, have I written.—Written upon ſomething; upon nothing; upon REVENGE, which I love; upon LOVE, which I hate, *heartily* hate, becauſe it is my maſter; and upon the devil knows what beſides:—for, looking back, I am amazed at the length of it. *Thou* mayeſt read it: *I* would not for a king's ranſom—But ſo as I do *but* write, thou ſayeſt thou wilt be pleaſed.

Be pleaſed then. I *command* thee to be pleaſed: if not for the writer's or written's ſake, for thy word's ſake. And ſo in the royal ſtyle (for am I not likely to be thy king and thy emperor in the great affair before us?) I bid thee very heartily

Farewel.

LETTER XXXII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

TUESDAY, MARCH 14.

I Now ſend you copies of my letters to my uncles: with their anſwers. Be pleaſed to return the latter by the

first depoſit. I leave them for *you* to make remarks upon. *I* ſhall make none.

'TO JOHN HARLOWE, ESQ.

'SAT. MARCH 11.

'ALLOW me, my honoured ſecond papa, as in my happy days you taught me to call you, to implore your intereſt with my papa, to engage him to diſpenſe with a command, which, if inſiſted upon, will deprive me of my free-will, and make me miſerable for my whole life.

'For my *whole life!* let me repeat: is that a ſmall point, my dear uncle, to give up? Am not *I* to live with the man? Is any-body elſe? Shall I not therefore be allowed to judge for myſelf, whether I *can*, or *cannot*, live *happily* with him?

'Should it be ever ſo *unhappily*, will it be prudence to complain, or appeal? If it were, to whom could I appeal with *effect* againſt a huſband? And would not the invincible and avowed diſlike I have for him at *ſetting out*, ſeem to juſtify any ill uſage from him, *in that ſtate*, were I to be ever ſo obſervant of him? And if I were to be at all obſervant of him, it muſt be from fear, not love.

'Once more, let me repeat, That this is not a *ſmall* point to give up: and that it is *for life*. Why, I pray you, good Sir, ſhould I be made miſerable for *life?* Why ſhould I be deprived of all comfort, but that which the hope that it would be a very ſhort one, would afford me?

'*Marriage* is a very ſolemn engagement, enough to make a young creature's heart ache, with the *beſt* proſpects, when ſhe thinks ſeriouſly of it!—To be given up to a ſtrange man; to be engrafted into a ſtrange family; to give up her very name, as a mark of her becoming his abſolute and dependent property; to be obliged to prefer this ſtrange man to father, mother—to every-body:—and his humours to all her own—Or to contend perhaps, in breach of a vowed duty, for every innocent inſtance of free-will—To go no whither; to make acquaintance; to give up acquaintance; to renounce even the ſtricteſt friendſhips perhaps; all at his pleaſure, whether ſhe think it reaſonable to do ſo or not: ſurely, Sir, a young creature ought not to be obliged to make all theſe ſacrifices but for ſuch a man as ſhe can love.—If ſhe be, how ſad muſt be the caſe!—How miſerable the life, if it be called *life!*

'I wiſh I could obey you all. What a pleaſure would it be to me, if I could!—*Marry firſt, and love will come after*, was ſaid by one of my deareſt friends: but this is a ſhocking aſſertion. A thouſand things may happen to make that ſtate but barely tolerable, where it is entered into with *mutual affection*: what muſt it then be, where the huſband can have no confidence in the love of his wife; but has reaſon rather to queſtion it, from the preference he *himſelf* believes ſhe would have given to ſomebody elſe, had ſhe had her own option? What doubts, what jealouſies, what want of tenderneſs, what unfavourable prepoſſeſſions, will there be, in a matrimony thus circumſtanced! How will every look, every action, even the moſt innocent, be liable to miſconſtruction!—While, on the other hand, an indifference, a careleſſneſs to oblige, may take place; and fear *only* can conſtrain even an *appearance* of what ought to be the effect of undiſguiſed love!

'Think ſeriouſly of theſe things, dear good Sir, and repreſent them to my father in that ſtrong light which the ſubject will bear; but in which my ſex, and my tender years and inexperience, will not permit me to paint it; and uſe your powerful intereſt, that your poor niece may not be conſigned to a miſery ſo durable.

'I offered to engage not to marry at all, if that condition may be accepted. What a diſgrace is it to me to be thus ſequeſtered from company, thus baniſhed my papa's and mamma's preſence; thus ſlighted and deſerted by you, Sir, and my other kind uncle! And to be hindered from attending at that publick worſhip, which, were I *out* of the way of my duty, would be moſt likely to reduce me *into* the right path again! —Is *this* the way, Sir; can *this* be thought to be the way to be taken

'with

'with a free and open ſpirit? May not 'this ſtrange method rather harden 'than convince? I cannot bear to live 'in diſgrace thus: the very ſervants ſo 'lately permitted to be under my own 'direction, hardly daring to ſpeak to 'me; my own ſervant diſcarded with 'high marks of undeſerved ſuſpicion 'and diſpleaſure, and my ſiſter's maid 'ſet over me.

'The matter may be too far puſhed. '—Indeed it may.—And then, per-'haps, every-one will be ſorry for their 'parts in it.

'May I be permitted to mention an 'expedient?—If I *am* to be watched, 'baniſhed, and confined; ſuppoſe, Sir, 'it were to be at *your* houſe?—Then 'the neighbouring gentry will the leſs 'wonder, that the perſon of whom they 'uſed to think ſo favourably, appear 'not at church here; and that ſhe re-'ceived not their viſits.

'I hope there can be no objection 'to this. You uſed to love to have 'me with you, Sir, when all went '*happily* with me: and will you not 'now permit me, in my *troubles*, the 'favour of your houſe, till all this 'diſpleaſure be overblown?—Upon my 'word, Sir, I will not ſtir out of 'doors, if you require the contrary of 'me: nor will I ſee any-body, but 'whom you will allow me to ſee; pro-'vided Mr. Solmes be not brought to 'perſecute me there.

'Procure, then, this favour for me; 'if you cannot procure the ſtill great-'er, that of a happy reconciliation; '(which nevertheleſs I preſume to hope 'for, if *you* will be ſo good as to plead 'for me) and you will then add to 'thoſe favours, and to that indulgence, 'which have bound me, and will for 'ever bind me to be *your dutiful and* 'obliged niece,

'CLARISSA HARLOWE.'

THE ANSWER.

'SUNDAY NIGHT.

'MY DEAR NIECE,

'IT grieves me to be forced to deny 'you any-thing you aſk. Yet it '*muſt* be ſo; for unleſs you can bring 'your mind to oblige us in this one 'point, in which our promiſes and 'honour were engaged before we be-'lieved there could be ſo ſturdy an op-'poſition, you muſt never expect to be 'what you have been to us all.

'In ſhort, niece, we are an *embat-'tled phalanx*. Your reading makes 'you a ſtranger to nothing, but what 'you ſhould be moſt acquainted with '—So you will ſee by that expreſſion, 'that we are not to be pierced by your 'perſuaſions, and invincible perſiſt-'ence. We have agreed *all* to be 'moved, or *none*; and not to comply 'without one another. So you know 'your deſtiny; and have nothing to 'do but to yield to it.

'Let me tell you, the virtue of obe-'dience lies not in obliging when you 'can be obliged again—But give up 'an inclination, and there is ſome 'merit in that.

'As to your expedient; you ſhall 'not come to my houſe, Miſs Clary; 'though this is a prayer I little thought 'I ever ſhould have denied you: for 'were you to keep your word as to ſee-'ing nobody but whom we pleaſe, yet 'can you *write* to ſomebody elſe, and 'receive letters from him. This we 'too well know you can, and have 'done—More is the ſhame and the 'pity!

'*You* offer to live ſingle, Miſs—*We* 'wiſh you married: but becauſe you 'may not have the man your heart is 'ſet upon, why, truly, you will have 'nobody we ſhall recommend. And 'as we know, that ſomehow or other 'you correſpond with him, or at leaſt 'did, as long as you could; and as he 'defies us all, and would not dare to 'do ſo, if he were not ſure of you in 'ſpite of us all; (which is not a little 'vexatious to us, you muſt think) we 'are reſolved to fruſtrate him, and 'triumph over him, rather than that 'he ſhould triumph over us: that is 'one word for all. So expect not any 'advocateſhip from me: I will not 'plead for you; and that's enough.

'From *your diſpleaſed uncle*,

'JOHN HARLOWE.

'P. S. For the reſt, I refer to my bro-'ther Antony.'

'TO ANTONY HARLOWE, ESQ.

'SATURDAY, MARCH 11.

'HONOURED SIR,

'AS you have thought fit to favour 'Mr. Solmes with your particular recommendation, and was very 'earneſt in his behalf, ranking him (as 'you told me upon introducing him to 'me) among your ſelect friends; and 'expecting my regards to him accordingly; I beg your patience, while I 'offer a few things, out of many that 'I could offer, to your ſerious conſideration, on occaſion of his *addreſs* to me, if I am to uſe that word.

'I am charged with prepoſſeſſion in 'another perſon's favour. You will 'be pleaſed, Sir, to remember, that 'till my brother returned from Scotland, that other perſon was not abſolutely diſcouraged, nor was I forbid to receive his viſits. I believe it 'will not be pretended, that in birth, 'education, or perſonal endowments, 'a compariſon can be made between 'the two. And only let me aſk you, 'Sir, if the one would have been 'thought of for me, had he not made 'ſuch offers, as, upon my word, I 'think, *I* ought not in juſtice to accept of, nor *he* to propoſe: offers, 'which if *he* had not made, I dare 'ſay, my *papa* would not have required them of him.

'But the one, it ſeems, has many 'faults:—is the other *faultleſs?*—The 'principal thing objected to Mr. Lovelace (and a very inexcuſable one) is, 'that he is immoral in his loves—Is 'not the other in his hatreds?—Nay, 'as I may ſay, in his loves too, (the 'object only differing) if *the love of money* be *the root of all evil.*

'But, Sir, if I am prepoſſeſſed, 'what has Mr. Solmes to hope for?—'Why ſhould he perſevere? What 'muſt I think of the man who would 'wiſh me to be his wife againſt my inclination?—And is it not a very harſh 'thing for my friends to deſire to ſee 'me married to one I *cannot* love, when 'they will not be perſuaded but that 'there is one whom I *do* love?

'Treated as I am, now is the time 'for me to ſpeak out, or never.—Let 'me review what it is Mr. Solmes depends upon on this occaſion. Does 'he believe, that the diſgrace which I 'ſuffer on his account, will give him a 'merit with me? Does he think to win 'my eſteem, through my uncles ſternneſs to me; by my brother's contemptuous uſage; by my ſiſter's unkindneſs; by being denied to viſit, or 'be viſited; and to correſpond with my 'choſen friend, although a perſon of unexceptionable honour and prudence, 'and of my own ſex; my ſervant to be 'torn from me, and another ſervant ſet 'over me; to be confined, like a priſoner, to narrow and diſgraceful limits, in order *avowedly* to mortify 'me, and to break my ſpirit; to be 'turned out of that family-management which I loved, and had the 'greater pleaſure in it, becauſe it was 'an eaſe, as I thought, to my mamma, 'and what my ſiſter choſe not; and 'yet, though time hangs heavy upon 'my hands, to be ſo put out of my 'courſe, that I have as little inclination as liberty to purſue any of my 'choice delights?—Are theſe ſteps neceſſary to reduce me to a level ſo low, 'as to make me a fit wife for this man? '—Yet theſe are all he can have to 'truſt to—And if his reliance is on 'theſe meaſures, I would have him to 'know, that he miſtakes *meekneſs* and *gentleneſs* of diſpoſition for *ſervility* and *baſeneſs* of heart.

'I beſeech you, Sir, to let the natural turn and bent of *his* mind and *my* mind be conſidered: what are his 'qualities, by which he would hope to win my eſteem?—Dear, dear Sir, if I *am* to be compelled, let it be in favour of a man that can read and write '—That can *teach* me ſomething: for 'what a huſband muſt that man make, 'who can do nothing but command; 'and needs himſelf the inſtruction he 'ſhould be qualified to give?

'I may be conceited, Sir; I may be 'vain of *my* little reading; of my 'writing; as of late I have more than 'once been told I am—But, Sir, the 'more unequal the propoſed match, if 'ſo: the better opinion I have of myſelf, the worſe I muſt have of him; 'and the more unfit are we for each 'other.

'Indeed, Sir, I muſt ſay, I thought 'my friends had put a higher value upon me. My brother pretended once, 'that it was owing to ſuch value, that

'Mr.

'Mr. Lovelace's addreſs was prohibited.—Can this be; and ſuch a man as Mr. Solmes be intended for me?

'As to his propoſed ſettlements, I hope I ſhall not incur your greater diſpleaſure, if I ſay, what all who know me have reaſon to think, (and ſome have upbraided me for) that I *deſpiſe* thoſe motives. Dear, dear Sir, what are ſettlements to one who has as much of her own as ſhe wiſhes for?—Who has more in her own power, as a ſingle perſon, than it is probable ſhe would be permitted to have at her diſpoſal, as a wife?—Whoſe expences and ambition are moderate; and who, if ſhe had ſuperfluities, would rather diſpenſe them to the neceſſitous, than lay them by her uſeleſs? If then ſuch narrow motives have ſo little weight with me for my *own* benefit, ſhall the remote and uncertain view of family-aggrandizement, and that in the perſon of my *brother* and his *deſcendants*, be thought ſufficient to influence me?

'Has the behaviour of that brother to me of late, or his conſideration for the family (which had ſo little weight with him, that he could chuſe to hazard a life ſo juſtly precious as an only ſon's, rather than not gratify paſſions which he is above attempting to ſubdue, and, give me leave to ſay, has been too much indulged in, either with regard to his own good, or the peace of any-body related to him; has his behaviour, I ſay) deſerved of *me* in particular, that I ſhould make a ſacrifice of my temporal (and, who knows? of my eternal) happineſs, to promote a plan formed upon *chimerical*, at leaſt upon *unlikely* contingencies; as I will undertake to demonſtrate, if I may be permitted to examine it?

'I am afraid you will condemn my warmth: but does not the occaſion require it? To the want of a greater degree of earneſtneſs in my oppoſition, it ſeems, it is owing, that ſuch advances have been made, as have been made. Then, dear Sir, allow ſomething, I beſeech you, for a ſpirit raiſed and embittered by diſgraces, which (knowing my own heart) I am confident to ſay, are unmerited.

'But why have I ſaid ſo much, in anſwer to the ſuppoſed charge of prepoſſeſſion, when I have declared to my mamma, as now, Sir, I do to you, that if it be not inſiſted upon that I ſhall marry any other perſon, particularly this Mr. Solmes, I will enter into any engagements never to have the other, nor any man elſe, without their conſents; that is to ſay, without the conſents of my father and mother, and of you my uncle, and my elder uncle, and my couſin Morden, as he is one of the truſtees for my grandfather's bounty to me? —As to my brother indeed, I cannot ſay, that his treatment of me has been of late ſo brotherly, as to entitle him to more than civility from me: and for *this*, give me leave to add, he would be very much my debtor.

'If I have not been explicit enough in declaring my diſlike to Mr. Solmes; (that the *prepoſſeſſion* which is charged upon me may not be ſuppoſed to influence me againſt him) I do declare ſolemnly, that, were there no ſuch man as Mr. Lovelace in the world, I would not have Mr. Solmes. It is neceſſary, in ſome *one* of my letters to my dear friends, that I ſhould write ſo clearly as to put this matter out of all doubt: and to whom can I better addreſs myſelf with an explicitneſs that can admit of no miſtake, than to that uncle who profeſſes the higheſt regard for plain-dealing and ſincerity?

'Let me then, for theſe reaſons, be ſtill more particular in ſome of my exceptions to him.

'Mr. Solmes appears to me (to all the world indeed) to have a very narrow mind, and no great capacity: he is coarſe and indelicate; as rough in his manners as in his perſon. He is not only narrow, but covetous: being poſſeſſed of great wealth, he enjoys it not; nor has the ſpirit to communicate to a diſtreſs of any kind. Does not his own ſiſter live unhappily, for want of a little of his ſuperfluities? And ſuffers he not his aged uncle, the brother of his own mother, to owe to the generoſity of ſtrangers the poor ſubſiſtence he picks up from half-a-dozen families?—You know, Sir, my open, free, communicative temper: how unhappy muſt I be, circumſcribed in his narrow, ſelfiſh circle! out of which, being withheld by this diabolical parſimony, he

'dare

'dare no more ſtir, than a conjuror 'out of his; nor would let me.

'Such a man as this, *love!*—Yes, 'perhaps he may, my grandfather's 'eſtate; which he has told ſeveral per-'ſons (and could not reſiſt hinting the 'ſame thing to me, with that ſort of 'pleaſure which a low mind takes, 'when it intimates it's *own intereſt* as a 'ſufficient motive for it to expect *ano-'ther's favour*) lies ſo extremely con-'venient for him, that it would double 'the value of a conſiderable part of his 'own. That eſtate, and an alliance 'which would do credit to his obſcu-'rity and narrowneſs, may make him 'think he *can* love, and induce him to 'believe he *does*: but at moſt, it is but 'a ſecond-place love. Riches were, 'are, and always will be, his predo-'minant paſſion. *His* were left him 'by a miſer, on this very account: 'and I muſt be obliged to forego all 'the choice delights of my life, and 'be as mean as he, or elſe be quite un-'happy. Pardon, Sir, this ſeverity of 'expreſſion—One is apt to ſay more 'than one would, of a perſon one diſ-'likes, when more is ſaid in his fa-'vour than he can poſſibly deſerve; 'and when he is urged to my accept-'ance with ſo much vehemence, that 'there is no choice left me.

'Whether theſe things be perfectly 'ſo, or not, while I *think* they are, it 'is impoſſible I ſhould ever look upon 'Mr. Solmes in the light he is offered 'to me. Nay, were he to be proved 'ten times better than I have repre-'ſented him, and ſincerely think him; 'yet would he be ſtill ten times more 'diſagreeable to me than any other 'man I know in the world. Let me 'therefore beſeech you, Sir, to become 'an advocate for your niece, that ſhe 'may not be made a victim to a man ſo 'highly diſguſtful to her.

'You and my other uncle can do a 'great deal for me, if you pleaſe, 'with my papa. Be perſuaded, Sir, 'that I am not governed by obſtinacy 'in this caſe; but by averſion; an aver-'ſion I cannot overcome: for, if I 'have but *endeavoured* to reaſon with 'myſelf, (out of regard to the duty I 'owe to my father's will) my heart 'has recoiled, and I have been averſe 'to myſelf, for offering but to argue 'with myſelf, in behalf of a man 'who, in the light he appears to me, 'has no one merit; and who, know-'ing this averſion, could not perſe-'vere as he does, if he had the ſpirit 'of a man.

'If, Sir, you can think the con-'tents of this letter reaſonable, I be-'ſeech you to ſupport them with your 'intereſt: if not—I ſhall be moſt un-'happy!—Nevertheleſs, it is but juſt 'in me ſo to write, as that Mr. Solmes 'may know what he has to truſt to.

'Forgive, dear Sir, this tedious let-'ter; and ſuffer it to have weight with 'you; and you will for ever oblige 'your *dutiful and affectionate niece*,

'CL. HARLOWE.'

MR. ANTONY HARLOWE, TO MISS CL. HARLOWE.

'NIECE CLARY,

'YOU had better not write to us, 'or to any of us. To me, par-'ticularly, you had better never to 'have ſet pen to paper, on the ſubject 'whereupon you have written. *He 'that is firſt in his own cauſe*, ſaith the 'wiſe man, *ſeemeth juſt: but his neigh-'bour cometh and ſearcheth him.* And 'ſo, in this reſpect, I will be your 'neighbour; for I will ſearch your heart 'to the bottom; that is to ſay, if your 'letter be written from your heart. 'Yet do I know what a taſk I have 'undertaken, becauſe of the knack 'you are noted for at writing: but in 'defence of a father's authority, in 'behalf of the good, and honour, 'and proſperity of a family one comes 'of, what a hard thing would it be, 'if one could not beat down all the ar-'guments a *rebel* child (How loth I 'am to write down that word of Miſs 'Clary Harlowe!) can bring, in be-'half of her obſtinacy!

'In the firſt place, don't you de-'clare (and that contrary to your de-'clarations to your mother; remem-'ber that, girl!) that you prefer the 'man we all hate, and who hates us 'as bad?—Then what a character have 'you given of a worthy man! I won-'der you dare write ſo freely of one we 'all reſpect—But poſſibly it may be 'for that very reaſon.

'How you begin your letter!—Be-'cauſe I value Mr. Solmes as my 'friend, you treat him the worſe.—

'That's

'That's the plain dunſtable of the 'matter, Miſs!—I am not ſuch a fool 'but I can ſee that.—And ſo a noted 'whoremonger is to be choſen before 'a man who is a money-lover!—Let 'me tell you, niece, this little be-'comes ſo nice a one as you have been 'always reckoned. Who, think you, 'does moſt injuſtice, a prodigal man 'or a ſaving man?—The one ſaves his 'own money; the other ſpends other 'people's. But your favourite is a ſin-'ner in grain, and upon record.

'The devil's in your ſex! God forgive 'me for ſaying ſo—The niceſt of them 'will prefer a vile rake and wh—— 'I ſuppoſe I muſt not repeat the word: '—the *word* will offend, when the *vi-'cious* denominated by that word will 'be choſen! I had not been a batchelor 'to this time, if I had not ſeen ſuch a 'maſs of contradictions in you all.— 'Such *gnat-ſtrainers* and *camel-ſwal-'lowers*, as venerable holy writ has it.

'What names will perverſeneſs call 'things by!—A prudent man, who 'intends to be juſt to every-body, is 'a covetous man!—While a vile, pro-'fligate rake, is chriſtened with the ap-'pellation of a gallant man; and a po-'lite man, I'll warrant you!

'It is my firm opinion, Lovelace 'would not have ſo much regard for 'you as he profeſſes; but for two rea-'ſons. And what are theſe?—Why, 'out of ſpite to all of us—one of 'them: the other, becauſe of your in-'dependent fortune. I wiſh your good 'grandfather had not left what he did 'ſo much in your own power, as I may 'ſay. But little did he imagine his be-'loved grand-daughter would have 'turned upon all her friends as ſhe has 'done!

'*What has Mr. Solmes to hope for, if 'you are prepoſſeſſed!* Hey-day! Is this '*you*, couſin Clary!—Has he then no-'thing to hope for from your father's, 'and mother's, and our recommenda-'tions?—No, nothing at all, it ſeems! '—O brave!—I ſhould think that *this*, 'with a dutiful child, as we took you 'to be, was *enough*. Depending on 'this your duty, we proceeded: and 'now there is no help for it. For we 'will not be balked: neither ſhall our 'friend Mr. Solmes, I can tell you 'that.

'If your *eſtate is convenient for him*, 'what then? Does that (pert couſin) 'make it out that he does not love you? 'He had need to expect ſome good *with* 'you, that has ſo little good to hope for '*from* you; mind that. But, pray, is 'not this eſtate *our* eſtate, as we may 'ſay? Have we not *all* an intereſt in it, 'and a prior right, if right were to have 'taken place? And was it more than 'a good old man's dotage, God reſt his 'ſoul! that gave it you before us all?— 'Well, then, ought we not to have a 'choice who ſhall have it in marriage 'with you? And would you have the 'conſcience to wiſh us to let a vile fel-'low who hates us all, run away with 'it?—You bid me weigh what you 'write: do you weigh this, girl; and 'it will appear we have more to ſay for 'ourſelves than you was aware of.

'As to your hard treatment, as you 'call it, thank yourſelf for that. It may 'be over when you will: ſo I reckon 'nothing upon that. You was not ba-'niſhed and confined till all entreaty 'and fair ſpeeches were tried with you: 'mind that. And Mr. Solmes cannot 'help *your* obſtinacy.—Let that be ob-'ſerved too.

'*As to being viſited, and viſiting*; you 'never was fond of either: ſo that is a 'grievance put into the ſcale to make 'weight.—As to diſgrace, that is as bad 'to us as to you: ſo fine a young crea-'ture! So much as we uſed to brag of 'you!—And too beſides, this is all in 'your power, as the reſt.

'But your heart recoils, when you 'would perſuade yourſelf to obey your 'parent—Finely deſcribed, is it not!— 'Too truly deſcribed, I own, as you go 'on. I know, that you may love him 'if you will. I had a good mind to bid 'you hate him; then, perhaps, you 'would like him the better: for I have 'always found a moſt horrid romantick 'perverſeneſs in your ſex.—To *do* and 'to *love* what you ſhould not, is meat, 'drink, and veſture, to you all.

'I am abſolutely of your brother's 'mind, *That reading and writing*, 'though not too much for the wits of 'you young girls, are too much for your 'judgments.—You ſay, you *may be* 'conceited, couſin; you *may be* vain!— 'And ſo you *are*, to deſpiſe this gentle-'man as you do. He can read and write 'as well as *moſt* gentlemen, I can tell 'you *that*. Who told you Mr. Solmes 'cannot read and write? *But you muſt 'have a huſband who can learn you*

'*ſome-*

'*something!*—I wish you knew but your '*duty* as well as you do your talents—'That, niece, you have of late days to 'learn; and Mr. Solmes will therefore 'find something to instruct you in. I 'will not shew him this letter of yours, 'though you seem to desire it, lest it 'should provoke him to be too severe a 'schoolmaster, when you are his n.

'But when I think of it, suppose you '*are* readier at your pen than he—You 'will make the more useful wife to 'him; won't you? For who so good an 'œconomist as you?—And you may 'keep all his accounts, and save your-'selves a steward.—And, let me tell 'you, this is a fine advantage in a fa-'mily: for those stewards are often sad 'dogs, and creep into a man's estate 'before he knows where he is; and not 'seldom is he forced to pay them inte-'rest for his own money.

'I know not why a good wife should 'be above these things. It is better than 'lying abed half the day, and junket-'ing and card playing all the night, 'and making yourselves wholly useless 'to every good purpose in your own fa-'milies, as is now the fashion among 'ye—The duce take you all that do so, 'say I!—Only that, thank my stars, I 'am a batchelor.

'Then this is a province you are ad-'mirably versed in: you grieve that it 'is taken from you *here*, you know. So 'here, Miss, with Mr. Solmes you will 'have something to keep account of, 'for the sake of you and your children: 'with the other, perhaps, you will have 'an account to keep, too—But an ac-'count of what will go over the left-'shoulder: only of what he squanders, 'what he borrows, and what he owes, 'and never will pay. Come, come, cou-'sin, you know nothing of the world; a 'man's a man; and you may have many 'partners in a handsome man, and cost-'ly ones too, who may lavish away all 'you save. Mr. Solmes, therefore, for 'my money, and I hope for yours.

'*But Mr. Solmes is a coarse man.* He 'is not delicate enough for your nice-'ness; because I suppose he dresses not 'like a fop and a coxcomb, and because 'he lays not himself out in complimen-'tal nonsense, the poison of female 'minds. He is a man of sense, I can 'tell you. No man talks more to the 'purpose to *us*: but you fly him so, that 'he has no opportunity given him to 'express it to *you*; and a man who loves, 'if he have ever so much sense, looks 'like a fool; especially when he is de-'spised, and treated as you treated him 'the last time he was in your com-'pany.

'*As to his sister*; she threw herself 'away (as you want to do) against his 'full warning: for he told her what she 'had to trust to, if she married where 'she did marry. And he was as good 'as his word; and so an honest man 'ought: offences against warning ought 'to be smarted for. Take care this be 'not your case. Mind that.

'His *uncle* deserves no favour from '*him*; for he would have circumvented 'Mr. Solmes, and got Sir Oliver to 'leave to himself the estate he had al-'ways designed for him his nephew; 'and brought him up in the hope of it. '*Too ready forgiveness does but encou-'rage offences:* that's your good father's 'maxim; and there would not be so 'many headstrong daughters as there 'are, if this maxim were kept in mind. '—Punishments are of service to of-'fenders; rewards should be only to 'the meriting: and I think the former 'are to be dealt out rigorously, in wil-'ful cases.

'*As to his love*; he shews it but too 'much for your deservings, as they 'have been of late; let me tell you that: 'and this is *his* misfortune; and may 'in time perhaps be *yours*.

'*As to his parsimony*, which you 'wickedly call diabolical, [a very free 'word in your mouth, let me tell ye] 'little reason have *you* of all people for 'this, on whom he proposes, of his own 'accord, to settle all he has in the world: 'a proof, let him love *riches* as he will, 'that he loves *you* better. But that you 'may be without excuse on this score, 'we will tie him up to your own terms, 'and oblige him by the marriage-arti-'cles to allow you a very handsome 'quarterly sum to do what you please 'with. And this has been told you be-'fore; and I have said it to Mrs. Howe '(that good and worthy lady) before 'her proud daughter, that you might 'hear of it again.

'To contradict the charge of pre-'possession to Lovelace, you offer never 'to have him without our consents: and 'what is this saying, but that you will 'hope on for our consents, and to 'wheedle and tire us out? Then he

'will

'will always be in expectation while 'you are single: and we are to live on 'at this rate, (are we?) vexed by you, 'and continually watchful about you; 'and as continually exposed to his in'solence and threats. Remember last 'Sunday, girl!—What *might* have hap'pened, h—! your brother and he met? '—Moreover, you cannot do with such 'a spirit as his, as you can with wor'thy Mr. Solmes: the one you make 'tremble; the other will make you 'quake—Mind that—And you will 'not be able to help yourself. And re'member, that if there should be any 'misunderstanding between *one* of them 'and you, we should all interpose; and 'with effect, no doubt: but with the '*other*, it would be *self-do, self-have*; 'and who would either care or dare to 'put in a word for you? Nor let the 'supposition of matrimonial differences 'frighten you: honey-moon lasts not 'now-a-days above a fortnight; and 'Dunmow Flitch, as I have been in'formed, was *never* claimed; though 'some say *once* it was. Marriage is a 'queer state, child, whether paired by 'the parties or by their friends. Out 'of three brothers of us, you know, 'there was but one had courage to 'marry. And why was it, do you 'think? We were wise by other peo'ples experience.

'Don't despise money so much; you 'may come to know the value of it: 'that is a piece of *instruction* that you '*are to learn*; and which, according to 'your *own* notions, Mr. Solmes will 'be *able to teach you*.

'I do indeed *condemn your warmth*. 'I will not *allow for disgraces you bring 'upon yourself*. If I thought them *un'merited*, I would be your advocate. 'But it was always my notion, that 'children should not dispute their pa'rents authority. When your grand'father left his estate to you, though his 'three sons, and a grandson, and your 'elder sister, were in being, we all ac'quiesced: and why? Because it was 'our father's doing. Do you imitate 'that example: if you will not, those 'who set it you have the more reason to 'hold you inexcusable. Mind that, 'cousin.

'You mention your brother too scorn'fully: and, in your letter to him, are 'very disrespectful; and so indeed you 'are to your sister, in the letter you 'wrote to her. Your brother, Madam, 'is your brother; a third older than 'yourself; and a *man*: and pray be so 'good as not to forget what is due to a 'brother, who (next to us three bro'thers) is the head of the family; and 'on whom the name depends—As up'on your dutiful compliance depends 'the success of the noblest plan that 'ever was laid down for the honour of 'the family you are come of. And 'pray now let me ask you, If the ho'nour of that will not be an honour to 'you?—If you don't think so, the more 'unworthy you. You shall see the plan, 'if you promise not to be prejudiced 'against it, right or wrong. If you are 'not besotted to that man, I am sure 'you will like it. If you are, were Mr. 'Solmes an angel, it would signify no'thing: for the devil is love, and love 'is the devil, when it gets into any of 'your heads. Many examples have I 'seen of that.

'*If there were no such man as Love'lace in the world, you would not have 'Mr. Solmes*—You *would not*, Miss!—'Very pretty, truly!—We *see* how your 'spirit is *embittered* indeed.—Wonder 'not, since it is come to your *will not's*, 'that those who have authority over 'you, say, *You shall have the other*. 'And I am one. Mind that. And if it 'behoves YOU *to speak out*, Miss, it 'behoves US not to *speak in*. What's '*sauce for the goose is sauce for the gan'der*: take that in your thought too.

'I humbly apprehend, that Mr. 'Solmes *has the spirit of a man, and a 'gentleman*. I would admonish you, 'therefore, not to provoke it. He pities 'you as much as he loves you. He says, 'he will convince you of his love by 'deeds, since he is not permitted by you 'to express it by words. And all his 'dependence is upon your generosity 'hereafter. We hope he *may* depend 'upon that: we encourage him to think 'he may. And this heartens him up. 'So that you may lay his constancy at 'your parents and your uncles doors; 'and this will be another mark of your 'duty, you know.

'You must be sensible, that you re'flect upon your parents, and all of 'us, when you tell me you cannot in '*justice* accept of the settlements pro'posed to you. This reflection we 'should have wondered at from you 'once; but now we don't.

'There are many other very cen-
'surable paſſages in this free letter of
'yours; but we muſt place them to the
'account of your *embittered* ſpirit. I
'am glad you mentioned that word,
'becauſe we ſhould have been at a loſs
'what to have called it.—I ſhould much
'rather, nevertheleſs, have had reaſon
'to give it a better name.

'I love you dearly ſtill, Miſs. I
'think you, though my niece, one of
'the fineſt young gentlewomen I ever
'ſaw. But, upon my conſcience, I
'think you ought to obey your parents,
'and oblige me, and my brother John:
'for you know very well, that we have
'nothing but your good at heart; con-
'ſiſtently indeed with the good and ho-
'nour of *all* of us. What muſt we
'thing of any one of it, who would
'not promote the good of the whole?
'and who would ſet one part of it
'againſt another?—Which God for-
'bid, ſay I!—You ſee I am for the
'good of *all*. What ſhall *I* get by it,
'let things go as they will? Do I want
'any-thing of any-body for my own
'ſake?—Does my brother John?—
'Well, then, couſin Clary, what would
'you be at, as I may ſay?

'O but you can't love Mr. Solmes!
'—But, I ſay, you know not *what* you
'can do. You *encourage* yourſelf in
'your diſlike. You *permit* your heart
'(little did I think it was ſuch a fro-
'ward one) to *recoil*. Take it to taſk,
'niece; *drive it on* as faſt as it *recoils*,
'[we do ſo in all our ſea-fights, and
'land-fights too, by our ſailors and
'ſoldiers, or we ſhould not conquer]
'and we are all ſure you will overcome
'it. And why? becauſe you *ought*.
'So *we* think, whatever *you* think:
'and whoſe thoughts are to be prefer-
'red? You may be *wittier* than we;
'but, if you are *wiſer*, we have lived
'ſome of us, let me tell you, to very
'little purpoſe thirty or forty years
'longer than you.

'I have written as long a letter as
'yours. I may not write in ſo lively,
'or ſo polite a ſtile as my niece: but
'I think I have all the argument on
'my ſide: and you will vaſtly oblige
'me, if you will ſhew me by your
'compliance with all our deſires, that
'you think ſo too. If you do not, you
'muſt not expect an advocate, or even
'a friend, in me, dearly as I love you.

'For then I ſhall be ſorry to be called
'*your uncle*,

'ANTONY HARLOWE.

'TUESDAY, TWO IN
'THE MORNING.

'POSTSCRIPT.

'You muſt ſend me no more letters:
'but a compliable one you may ſend.
'But I need not have forbid you; for
'I am ſure, this, by fair argument,
'is unanſwerable—I know it is. I
'have written day and night, I may
'ſay, ever ſince Sunday morning,
'only church time, or the like of
'that: but this is the laſt, I can tell
'you, from

'ANT. H.'

LETTER XXXIII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

THURSDAY, MARCH 16.

HAVING met with ſuch bad ſucceſs in my application to my relations, I have taken a ſtep that will ſurprize you. It is no other than writing a letter to Mr. Solmes himſelf. I ſent it; and have his anſwer. He had certainly help in it. For I have ſeen a letter of his; as indifferently worded, as poorly ſpelt. Yet the ſuperſcription is of *his* dictating, I dare ſay; for he is a formal wretch. With theſe, I ſhall incloſe one from my brother to me, on occaſion of mine to Mr. Solmes. I did think that it was poſſible to diſcourage the man from proceeding; and if I could have done that, it would have anſwered all my wiſhes. It was worth the trial. But you'll ſee nothing will do. My brother has taken his meaſures too ſecurely.

'TO ROGER SOLMES, ESQ.

'WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15.

'SIR,

'YOU will wonder to receive a let-
'ter from me; and more ſtill at
'the uncommon ſubject of it. But
'the neceſſity of the caſe will juſtify
'me, at leaſt in my own apprehenſion;
'and

'and I shall therefore make no other 'apology for it.

'When you first came acquainted 'with our family, you found the writer 'of this one of the happiest creatures 'in the world; beloved by the best and 'most indulgent of parents; and re- 'joicing in the kind favour of two 'affectionate uncles, and in the esteem 'of every one.

'But how is this happy scene now 'changed!—You was pleased to cast 'a favourable eye upon me. You ad- 'dressed yourself to my friends: your 'proposals were approved of by them '—approved of without consulting me; 'as if my choice and happiness were 'of the least signification. Those who 'had a right to all reasonable obedience 'from me, insisted upon it without re- 'serve. I had not the felicity to think 'as they did; almost the first time my 'sentiments differed from theirs. I 'besought them to indulge me in a 'point so important to my future hap- 'piness: but, alas, in vain! And then '(for I thought it was but honest) I told '*you* my mind; and even that my af- 'fections were engaged. But, to my 'mortification and surprize, you per- 'sisted, and still persist.

'The consequence of all is too 'grievous for me to repeat: you, who 'have such free access to the rest of the 'family, know it too well—too well 'you know it, either for the credit of 'your own generosity, or for my re- 'putation. I am used, on your ac- 'count, as I never before was used, 'and never before was thought to de- 'serve to be used; and this was the 'hard, the impossible condition of their 'returning favour, that I must prefer 'a man *to* all others, that *of* all others 'I cannot prefer.

'Thus distressed, and made unhappy, 'and all for your sake, and through 'your cruel perseverance, I write, Sir, 'to demand of you the peace of mind 'you have robbed me of: to demand 'of you the love of so many dear 'friends, of which you have deprived 'me; and, if you have the generosity 'that should distinguish a man, and a 'gentleman, to adjure you not to conti- 'nue an address that has been attended 'with such cruel effects to the creature 'you profess to esteem.

'If you really value me, as my friends 'would make me believe, and as you 'have declared you do, must it not be 'a mean and selfish value? A value 'that can have no merit with the un- 'happy object of it, because it is at- 'tended with effects so grievous to her? 'It must be for *your own sake* only, 'not for *mine*. And even in this 'point you must be mistaken; for, 'would a prudent man wish to marry 'one who has not a heart to give? Who 'cannot esteem him? Who therefore 'must prove a bad wife!—And how 'cruel would it be to make a poor crea- 'ture a bad wife, whose pride it would 'be to make a good one?

'If I am capable of judging, our 'tempers and inclinations are vastly 'different. Any other of my sex will 'make you happier than I can. The 'treatment I meet with, and the ob- 'stinacy, as it is called, with which I 'support myself under it, ought to 'convince you of this; were I *not* able 'to give so good a reason for this my 'supposed perverseness, as that I can- 'not consent to marry a man whom I 'cannot value.

'But if, Sir, you have not so much 'generosity in your value for me, as 'to desist for *my own* sake, let me con- 'jure you, by the regard due to *your- 'self*, and to your own future happi- 'ness, to discontinue your suit, and 'place your affections on a worthier 'object: for why should you make *me* 'miserable, and *yourself* not happy? 'By this means you will do all that is 'now in your power to restore to me 'the affection of my friends; and, if 'that can be, it will leave me in as 'happy a state as you found me in. 'You need only to say, that you see 'there are no HOPES, as you will per- 'haps complaisantly call it, of suc- 'ceeding with me; [and indeed, Sir, 'there cannot be a greater truth] and 'that you will therefore no more think 'of me; but turn your thoughts ano- 'ther way.

'Your compliance with this request 'will lay me under the highest obli- 'gation to your generosity, and make 'me ever *your well-wisher, and humble 'servant*,

'CLARISSA HARLOWE.'

'TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

'THESE MOST HUMBLY PRESENT.

'DEAREST MISS,

'YOUR letter has had a very 'contrary effect upon me, to 'what you seem to have expected from 'it. It has double convinced me of 'the excellency of your mind, and of 'the honour of your disposition. Call 'it *selfish*, or what you please, I must 'persist in my suit; and happy shall I 'be, if by patience and perseverance, 'and a steady and unalterable devoir, 'I may at last overcome the difficulty 'laid in my way.

'As your good parents, your uncles, 'and other friends, are absolutely determined you shall never have Mr. 'Lovelace, if they can help it; and 'as I presume no other person is in the 'way, I will contentedly wait the issue 'of this matter. And forgive me, 'dearest Miss; but a person should 'sooner persuade me to give up to him 'my estate, as an instance of my generosity, because *he* could not be happy 'without it, than I would a much 'more valuable treasure, to promote 'the felicity of another, and make his 'way easier to circumvent myself.

'Pardon me, dear Miss; but I must 'persevere, though I am sorry you 'suffer on my account, as you are pleased to think; for I never before saw 'the woman I could love: and while 'there is any hope, and that you remain undisposed of to some happier 'man, I must and will be *your faithful and obsequious admirer*,

'ROGER SOLMES.

'MARCH 16.'

MR. JAMES HARLOWE, TO MISS CL. HARLOWE.

'MARCH 16.

'WHAT a fine whim you took into 'your head, to write a letter to 'Mr. Solmes, to persuade him to give 'up his pretensions to you!—Of *all* the 'pretty romantick flights you have delighted in, this was certainly one of 'the most extraordinary. But to say 'nothing of what fires us all with indignation against you, (your owning 'your prepossession in a villain's favour, and your impertinence to me, 'and your sister, and your uncles; one 'of which has given it you home, 'child) how can you lay at Mr. 'Solmes's door the usage you so bitterly complain of?—You know, little 'fool as you are, that it is your fondness for Lovelace that has brought 'upon you all these things; and which 'would have happened whether Mr. 'Solmes had honoured you with his 'addresses or not.

'As you must needs know this to be 'true, consider, pretty witty Miss, if 'your fond love-sick heart can let you 'consider, what a fine figure all your 'expostulations with Us, and charges 'upon Mr. Solmes, make!—With what 'propriety do you *demand* of *him* to restore to you your former happiness, (as 'you call it, and *merely* call it; for if 'you thought our favour so, you would 'restore it to yourself) since it is yet 'in your own power to do so? Therefore, Miss Pert, none of your pathe-'ticks, except in the right place. Depend upon it, whether you have Mr. 'Solmes, or not, you shall never have 'your heart's delight, the vile rake 'Lovelace, if our parents, if our uncles, if I, can hinder it. No! you 'fallen angel, you shall not give your 'father and mother such a *son*, nor me 'such a *brother*, in giving yourself that 'profligate wretch for a *husband*. And 'so set your heart at rest, and lay aside 'all thoughts of him, if ever you expect forgiveness, reconciliation, or a 'kind opinion from any of your family; but especially from him, who, 'at present, styles himself *your brother*,

'JAMES HARLOWE.

'*P. S.* I know your knack at letter-'writing. If you send me an answer to this, I will return it unopened; for I will not argue with 'your perverseness in so plain a case. '—Only once for all, I was willing 'to put you right as to Mr. Solmes; 'whom I think to blame to trouble 'his head about you.'

LETTER XXXIV.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

FRIDAY, MARCH 17.

I Receive, with great pleasure, the early and chearful assurances of your loyalty and love. And let our principal

cipal and moſt truſty friends named in my laſt know that I do.

I would have thee, Jack, come down, as ſoon as thou canſt. I believe I ſhall not want the others ſo ſoon. Yet they may come down to Lord M.'s. I will be there, if not to receive them, to ſatisfy my lord, that there is no new miſchief in hand, which will require his ſecond intervention.

For thyſelf, thou muſt be conſtantly with me: not for my *ſecurity*; the family dare do nothing but bully; they bark only at a diſtance; but for my *entertainment*; that thou mayſt, from the Latin and the Engliſh claſſicks, keep my love-ſick ſoul from drooping.

Thou hadſt beſt come to me here, in thy old corporal's coat: thy ſervant out of livery; and to be upon a familiar foot with me, as a diſtant relation, to be provided for by thy intereſt above—I mean not in Heaven, thou mayſt be ſure. Thou wilt find me at a little alehouſe; they call it an inn; the White Hart; moſt terribly wounded (but by the weather only) the ſign—In a ſorry village; within five miles from Harlowe Place. Every-body knows Harlowe Place; for, like Verſailles, it is ſprung up from a dunghill, within every elderly perſon's remembrance. Every poor body, particularly, knows it. But that only for a few years paſt, ſince a certain angel has appeared there among the ſons and daughters of men.

The people here at the Hart are poor, but honeſt; and have gotten it into their heads, that I am a man of quality in diſguiſe; and there is no reining in their officious reſpect. Here is a pretty little ſmirking daughter; ſeventeen ſix days ago. I call her my roſe-bud. Her grandmother, (for there is no mother) a good neat old woman, as ever filled a wicker chair in a chimney-corner, has beſought me to be merciful to her.

This is the right way with me. Many and many a pretty rogue had I ſpared, whom I did *not* ſpare, had my power been acknowledged, and my mercy in time implored. But the *debellare ſuperbos* ſhould be my motto, were I to have a new one.

This ſimple chit (for there is a ſimplicity in her thou wouldſt be highly pleaſed with: all humble; all officious; all innocent—I love her for her humility, her officiouſneſs, and even for her *innocence*) will be pretty amuſement to thee; while I combat with the weather, and dodge and creep about the walls and purlieus of Harlowe Place. Thou wilt ſee in her mind, all that her ſuperiors have been taught to conceal, in order to render themſelves leſs natural, and of conſequence leſs pleaſing.

But I charge thee, that thou do not (what I would not permit myſelf to do for the world—I charge thee that thou do not) crop my roſe-bud. She is the only flower of fragrance, that has blown in this vicinage for ten years paſt; or will for ten years to come: for I have looked backwards to the *have-been's*, and forward to the *will-be's*; having but too much leiſure upon my hands in my preſent waiting.

I never was ſo honeſt for ſo long together ſince my matriculation. It behoves me ſo to be—Some way or other, my receſs at this little inn may be found out; and it will then be thought that my roſe-bud has attracted me. A report in my favour, from ſimplicities ſo amiable, may eſtabliſh me; for the grandmother's relation to my roſe-bud may be ſworn to: and the father is an honeſt poor man; has no joy, but in his roſe-bud.—O Jack! ſpare thou therefore (for I ſhall leave thee often alone with her, ſpare thou) my roſe-bud!—Let the rule I never departed from, but it coſt me a long regret, be obſerved to my roſe-bud! Never to ruin a poor girl, whoſe ſimplicity and innocence were all ſhe had to truſt to; and whoſe fortunes were too low to ſave her from the rude contempts of worſe minds than her own, and from an indigence extreme: ſuch a one will only pine in ſecret; and at laſt, perhaps, in order to refuge herſelf from ſlanderous tongues and virulence, be induced to tempt ſome guilty ſtream, or ſeek her end in the knee-encircling garter, that, peradventure, was the firſt attempt of abandoned love.—No defiances will my roſe-bud breathe; no *ſelf*-dependent, *thee*-doubting watchfulneſs, (indirectly challenging thy inventive machinations to do their worſt) will ſhe aſſume. Unſuſpicious of her danger, the lamb's throat will hardly ſhun thy knife!—O be not thou the butcher of my lambkin!

The leſs be thou ſo, for the reaſon I am going to give thee—The gentle heart is touched by love: her ſoft boſom heaves with a paſſion ſhe has not yet

yet found a name for. I once caught her eye following a young carpenter, a widow neighbour's son, living [to speak in her dialect] *at the little white house over the way*. A gentle youth he also seems to be, about three years older than herself: play-mates from infancy, till his eighteenth and her fifteenth year furnished a reason for a greater distance in shew, while their hearts gave a better for their being nearer than ever—For I soon perceived the love reciprocal. A scrape and a bow at first seeing his pretty mistress; turning often to salute her following eye; and, when a winding lane was to deprive him of her sight, his whole body turned round, his hat more reverently d'offed than before. This answered (for, unseen, I was behind her) by a low curtsey, and a sigh that Johnny was too far off to hear!—'Happy whelp!' said I to myself!—I withdrew; and in tript my rose-bud, as if satisfied with the dumb shew, and wishing nothing beyond it.

I have examined the little heart. She has made me her confidante. She owns, she could love Johnny Barton very well: and Johnny Barton has told her, he could love her better than any maiden he ever saw—'But, alas! it must not be 'thought of.'—'Why not be thought 'of!'—She don't know!—And then she sighed: but Johnny has an aunt, who will give him an hundred pounds, when his time is out; and her father cannot give her but a few things, or so, to set her out with; and though Johnny's mother says, she knows not where Johnny would have a prettier, or notabler wife, yet—and then she sighed again—'What 'signifies talking?—I would not have 'Johnny be unhappy and poor for me! '—For what good would that do *me*, 'you know, Sir!'

What would I give [by my soul my angel will indeed reform me, if her friends implacable folly ruin us not both! What would I give] to have so innocent and so good a heart, as either my rose-bud's, or Johnny's!

I have a confounded mischievous one—by *nature* too, I think!—A good motion now-and-then rises from it: but it dies away presently—A love of intrigue—An invention for mischief—A triumph in subduing—Fortune encouraging and supporting—And a constitution—What signifies palliating? But I believe I had been a rogue, had I been a plough-boy.

But the devil's in this sex. Eternal misguiders. Who, that has once trespassed with them, ever recovered his virtue? And yet where there is not virtue, which nevertheless we free-livers are continually plotting to destroy, what is there even in the ultimate of our wishes with them?—*Preparation* and *expectation* are in a manner every-thing; *reflection* indeed may be something, if the mind be hardened above feeling the guilt of a past *trespass*; but the *fruition*, what is there in that? And yet that being the end, nature will be satisfied with it.

See what grave reflections an innocent subject will produce! It gives me some pleasure to think, that it is not out of my *power* to reform: but then, Jack, I am afraid I must keep better company than I do at present—For we certainly harden one another. But be not cast down, my boy; there will be time enough to give the whole fraternity warning to chuse another leader: and I fancy thou wilt be the man.

Mean time, as I make it my rule, whenever I have committed a very capital enormity, to do some good by way of atonement; and as I believe I am a pretty deal indebted on that score: I intend, before I leave these parts, (successfully shall I leave them I hope, or I shall be tempted to double the mischief by way of revenge, though not to my rose-bud any) to join an hundred pounds to Johnny's aunt's hundred pounds, to make one innocent couple happy.—I repeat therefore, and for half-a-dozen more *therefores*, spare thou my rose-bud.

An interruption—Another letter anon; and both shall go together.

LETTER XXXV.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

I Have found out by my *watchful spy* almost as many of my charmer's motions, as of those of the rest of her relations. It delights me to think how the rascal is caressed by the uncles and nephew; and let into *their* secrets; yet it proceeds all the time by *my* line of direction. I have charged him, however, on forfeiture of his present weekly stipend,

fend, and my future favour, to take care, that neither my beloved, nor any of the family, ſuſpect him: I have told him that he may indeed watch her egreſſes and regreſſes; but that only keep off other ſervants from her paths; yet not to be ſeen by her himſelf.

The dear creature has tempted him, he told *them*, with a bribe [*which ſhe never offered*] to convey a letter [*which ſhe never wrote*] to Miſs Howe; *he believes*, with one incloſed, (*perhaps to me:*) but he declined it; and he begged they would take no notice of it to *her*. This brought him a ſtingy ſhilling; great applauſe; and an injunction followed it to all the ſervants, for the ſtricteſt look-out, leſt ſhe ſhould contrive ſome way to ſend it—And, about an hour after, an order was given him to throw himſelf in her way; and (expreſſing his concern for denying her requeſt) to tender his ſervice to her, and to bring them her letter: which it will be *proper for him to report* that ſhe has refuſed to give him.

Now, ſeeſt thou not how many good ends this contrivance anſwers?

In the firſt place, the lady is ſecured by it, againſt her own knowledge, in the liberty allowed her of taking her private walks in the garden; for *this attempt* has confirmed them in their belief, that now they have turned off her maid, ſhe has no way to ſend a letter out of the houſe: if ſhe had, ſhe would not have run the riſque of tempting a fellow who had not been in her ſecret—So that ſhe can proſecute unſuſpectedly her correſpondence with me, and Miſs Howe.

In the next place, it will perhaps afford me an opportunity of a private interview with her, which I am meditating, let her take it as ſhe will; having found out by my *ſpy* (who can keep off every-body elſe) that ſhe goes every morning and evening to a wood-houſe remote from the dwelling-houſe, under pretence of viſiting and feeding a ſet of bantam-poultry, which were produced from a breed that was her grandfather's, and of which, for that reaſon, ſhe is very fond; as alſo of ſome other curious fowls brought from the ſame place. I have an account of all her motions here.—And as ſhe has owned to me in one of her letters that ſhe correſponds privately with Miſs Howe, I preſume it is by this way.

The interview I am meditating, will produce her conſent, I hope, to other favours of the like kind: for, ſhould ſhe not chuſe the place in which I am expecting to ſee her, I can attend her anywhere in the rambling, Dutch-taſte garden, whenever ſhe will permit me that honour; for my implement, *high Joſeph Leman*, has procured me the opportunity of getting two keys made to the garden-door, (one of which I have given him, for reaſons good;) which door opens to the haunted coppice, as tradition has made the ſervants think it; a man having been found hanging in it about twenty years ago: and Joſeph, upon proper notice, will leave it unbolted.

But I was obliged previouſly to give him my honour, that no miſchief ſhould happen to any of my adverſaries from this liberty; for the fellow tells me, he loves all his maſters: and, only that he knows I am a man of honour; and that my alliance will do credit to the family; and after prejudices are overcome, every-body will think ſo; or he would not for the world act the part he does.

There never was a rogue, who had not a ſalvo to himſelf for being ſo.—What a praiſe to *honeſty*, that every man pretends to it, even at the inſtant that he knows he is purſuing the methods that will perhaps prove him a knave to the whole world, as well as to his own conſcience!

But what this ſtupid family can mean, to make all this neceſſary, I cannot imagine. My REVENGE and my LOVE are uppermoſt by turns. If the latter ſucceed not, the gratifying of the former will be my only conſolation: and, by all that's good, they ſhall feel it; although for it I become an exile from my native country for ever!

I will throw myſelf into my charmer's preſence. I have twice already attempted it in vain. I ſhall then ſee what I may depend upon from her favour. If I thought I had no proſpect of that, I ſhould be tempted to carry her off.—That would be a rape worthy of a Jupiter!

But all gentle ſhall be my movements: all reſpectful, even to reverence, my addreſs to her—Her hand ſhall be the only witneſs to the preſſure of my lip—my trembling lip: I *know* it will tremble, if I do not *bid* it tremble. As ſoft my ſighs, as the ſighs of my gentle roſe-bud. By *my* humility will I invite *her* confidence; the lonelineſs of the place

place shall give me no advantage: to dissipate her fears, and engage her reliance upon my honour for the future, shall be my whole endeavour; but little will I complain of, not at all will I threaten, those who are continually threatening me; but yet with a view to act the part of Dryden's Lion; to secure my love, or to let loose my vengeance upon my hunters.

'What though his mighty soul his grief con-
'tains?
'He meditates revenge who *least* complains:
'And like a lion slumb'ring in his way,
'Or sleep dissembling, while he waits his prey,
'His fearless foes within his distance draws;
'Constrains his roaring, and contracts his
'paws:
'Till at the last, his time for fury found,
'He shoots with sudden vengeance from the
'ground:
'The prostrate vulgar passes o'er, and spares;
'But, with a lordly rage, his hunters tears.'

LETTER XXXVI.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

SATURDAY, MARCH 18.

I Have been frighted out of my wits—Still am in a manner out of breath—Thus occasioned—I went down, under the usual pretence, in hopes to find something from you. Concerned at my disappointment, I was returning from the wood-house, when I heard a rustling as of somebody behind a stack of wood. I was extremely surprized: but still more, to behold a man coming from behind the furthermost stack. 'O,' thought I, at that moment, 'the sin of 'a prohibited correspondence!'

In the same point of time that I saw him, he besought me not to be frighted: and, still nearer approaching me, threw open a horseman's coat; and who should it be but Mr. Lovelace!—I could not scream out, (yet attempted to scream, the moment I saw a man; and again, when I saw who it was;) for I had no voice: and had I not caught hold of a prop which supported the old roof, I should have sunk.

I had hitherto, as you know, kept him at a distance: and now, as I recovered myself, judge of my first emotions, when I recollected his character from every mouth of my family; his enterprizing temper; and found myself alone with him, in a place so near a bye-lane, and so remote from the house.

But his respectful behaviour soon dissipated these fears, and gave me others; lest we should be seen together, and information of it given to my brother: the consequences of which, I could readily think, would be, if not further mischief, an imputed assignation, a stricter confinement, a forfeited correspondence with you, my beloved friend, and a pretence for the most violent compulsion; and neither the one set of reflections, nor the other, acquitted him to me for his bold intrusion.

As soon, therefore, as I could speak, I expressed with the greatest warmth my displeasure; and told him, that he cared not how much he exposed me to the resentment of all my friends, provided he could gratify his own impetuous humour. I then commanded him to leave the place that moment; and was hurrying from him, when he threw himself in the way at my feet, beseeching my stay for one moment; declaring, that he suffered himself to be guilty of this rashness, as I thought it, to avoid one much greater—For, in short, he could not bear the hourly insults he received from my family, with the thoughts of having so little interest in my favour, that he could not promise himself that his patience and forbearance would be attended with any other issue than to lose me for ever, and be triumphed over and insulted upon it.

This man, you know, has very ready knees. You have said, that he ought, in small points, frequently to offend, on purpose to shew what an address he is master of.

He ran on, expressing his apprehensions that a temper so gentle and obliging, as he said mine was, to every-body but him, (and a dutifulness so exemplary inclined me to do my part to others, whether they did theirs or not by me) would be wrought upon in favour of a man set up in part to be revenged upon myself, for my grandfather's envied distinction of me; and in part to be revenged upon him, for having given life to one, who would have taken his; and now sought to deprive him of hopes dearer to him than life.

I told him he might be assured, that the severity and ill-usage I met with would

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would be far from effecting the propoſed end: that although I could, with great ſincerity, declare for a ſingle life, (which had always been my choice;) and particularly, that if ever I married, if they would not inſiſt upon the man I had an averſion to, it ſhould not be with the man they diſliked.

He interrupted me here: he hoped I would forgive him for it; but he could not help expreſſing his great concern, that, after ſo many inſtances of his paſſionate and obſequious devotion—

'And pray, Sir,' ſaid I, 'let me in-
'terrupt you in my turn—Why don't
'you aſſert, in ſtill plainer words, the
'obligation you have laid me under by
'this your boaſted devotion? Why
'don't you let me know, in terms as
'high as your implication, that a per-
'ſeverance I have not wiſhed for, which
'has ſet all my relations at variance
'with me, is a merit that throws up-
'on me the guilt of ingratitude for not
'anſwering it as you ſeem to expect?'

I muſt forgive him, he ſaid, if he, who pretended only to a comparative merit, (and otherwiſe thought no man living could deſerve me) had preſumed to hope for a greater ſhare in my favour, than he had hitherto met with, when ſuch men as Mr. Symmes, Mr. Wyerley, and now, laſtly, ſo vile a reptile as this Solmes, however diſcouraged by myſelf, were made his competitors. As to the perſeverance I mentioned, it was impoſſible for him *not* to perſevere: but I muſt needs know, that were *he* not in being, the terms Solmes had propoſed were ſuch, as would have involved me in the ſame difficulties with my relations that I now laboured under. He therefore took the liberty to ſay, that my favour to him, far from increaſing thoſe difficulties, would be the readieſt way to extricate me from them. They had made it impoſſible [he told me, with too much truth] to oblige them any way, but by ſacrificing myſelf to Solmes. They were well apprized beſides of the difference between the two; one, whom they hoped to manage as they pleaſed; the other, who could and would protect me from every inſult; and who had *natural* proſpects much ſuperior to my brother's *fooliſh* views of a title.

How comes this man to know ſo well all our foibles? But I more wonder, how he came to have a notion of meeting me in this place?

I was very uneaſy to be gone; and the more as the night came on apace. But there was no getting from him, till I had heard a great deal more of what he had to ſay.

As he hoped, that I would one day make him the happieſt man in the world, he aſſured me, that he had ſo much regard for my fame, that he would be as far from adviſing any ſtep that was likely to caſt a ſhade upon my reputation (although that ſtep was to be ever ſo much in his own favour) as I would be to follow ſuch advice. But ſince I was not to be permitted to live ſingle, he would ſubmit it to my conſideration, whether I had any way but *one* to avoid the intended violence to my inclinations—My father ſo jealous of his authority; both my uncles in my father's way of thinking; my couſin Morden at a diſtance; my uncle and aunt Hervey awed into *inſignificance*, was his word; my brother and ſiſter inflaming every one; Solmes's offers captivating; Miſs Howe's mother rather of a party with them, for motives reſpecting example to her own daughter.

And then he aſked me, if I would receive a letter from Lady Betty Lawrance, on this occaſion: for Lady Sarah Sadleir, he ſaid, having lately loſt her only child, hardly looked into the world, or thought of it farther than to wiſh him married, and preferably to all the women in the world, with me.

To be ſure, my dear, there is a great deal in what the man ſaid—I may be allowed to ſay this, without an imputed *glow* or *throb*.—But I told him nevertheleſs, that although I had great honour for the ladies he was related to, yet I ſhould not chuſe to receive a letter on a ſubject that had a tendency to promote an end I was far from intending to promote: that it became me, ill as I was treated at preſent, to *hope* every-thing, to *bear* every-thing, and to *try* every-thing. When my father ſaw my ſtedfaſtneſs, and that I would die rather than have Mr. Solmes, he would perhaps recede.

Interrupting me, he repreſented the unlikelihood there was of that, from the courſes they had entered upon; which he thus enumerated:—Their engaging Mrs. Howe againſt me, in the

firſt place, as a perſon I might have thought to fly to, if puſhed to deſperation—my brother continually buzzing in my father's ears, that my couſin Morden would ſoon arrive, and then would inſiſt upon giving me poſſeſſion of my grandfather's eſtate, in purſuance of the will; which would render me independent of my father—their diſgraceful confinement of me—their diſmiſſing ſo ſuddenly my ſervant, and ſetting my ſiſter's over me—their engaging my mother, contrary to her own judgment, againſt me; theſe, he ſaid, were all ſo many flagrant proofs that they would ſtick at nothing to carry their point; and were what made him inexpreſſibly uneaſy.

He appealed to me, whether ever I knew my father recede from any reſolution he had once fixed; eſpecially, if he thought either his prerogative, or his authority, concerned in the queſtion. His acquaintance with our family, he ſaid, enabled him to give ſeveral inſtances (but they would be too grating to me) of an arbitrarineſs that had few examples even in the families of princes: an arbitrarineſs, which the moſt excellent of women, my mother, too ſeverely experienced.

He was proceeding, as I thought, with reflections of this ſort; and I angrily told him, I would not permit my father to be reflected upon; adding, That his ſeverity to me, however unmerited, was not a warrant for me to diſpenſe with my duty to him.

He had no pleaſure, he ſaid, in urging any-thing that could be *ſo* conſtrued; for, however well warranted *he* was to make ſuch reflections from the provocations they were continually giving him, he knew how offenſive to *me* any liberties of this ſort would be.—And yet he muſt own, that it was painful to *him*, who had youth and paſſions to be allowed for, as well as others, and who had always valued himſelf upon ſpeaking his mind; to curb himſelf, under ſuch treatment. Nevertheleſs, his conſideration for me would make him confine himſelf, in his obſervations, to facts that were too flagrant, and too openly avowed, to be diſputed. It could not therefore *juſtly* diſpleaſe, he would venture to ſay, if he made this natural inference from the premiſes, That if ſuch were my father's behaviour to a *wife* who diſputed not the imaginary *prerogative* he was ſo unprecedently fond of aſſerting, what room had a *daughter* to hope, that he would depart from an *authority* he was ſo earneſt, and ſo much more concerned to maintain?—Family-intereſts at the ſame time engaging; an averſion, however cauſeleſsly conceived, ſtimulating; my brother's and ſiſter's reſentments and ſelfiſh views co-operating; and my baniſhment from their preſence depriving me of all *perſonal* plea or entreaty in my own favour.

How unhappy, my dear, that there is but too much reaſon for theſe obſervations, and for this inference; made, likewiſe, with more coolneſs and reſpect to my family than one would have apprehended from a man ſo much provoked, and of paſſions ſo high, and generally thought uncontroulable!

Will you not queſtion me about *throbs* and *glows*, if, from ſuch inſtances of a command over his fiery temper, for my ſake, I am ready to infer, that were my friends capable of a reconciliation with him, he might be affected by arguments apparently calculated for his preſent and future good! Nor is it a very bad indication, that he has ſuch moderate notions of that very high prerogative in huſbands, of which we in our family have been accuſtomed to hear ſo much.

He repreſented to me, that my preſent diſgraceful confinement was known to all the world: that neither my ſiſter nor brother ſcrupled to repreſent me as an obliged and favoured child in a ſtate of actual rebellion—that, nevertheleſs, every-body who knew me was ready to juſtify me for an averſion to a man whom every-body thought utterly unworthy of *me*, and more fit for my *ſiſter*. That unhappy as he was, in not having been able to make any greater impreſſion upon me in his favour, all the world gave me to him: nor was there but one objection made to him, by his very enemies; (his birth, his fortunes, his proſpects, all unexceptionable, and the latter ſplendid) and that objection, he thanked God, and my example, was in a fair way of being removed for ever; ſince he had ſeen his error, and was heartily ſick of the courſes he had followed; which, however, were far leſs enormous than malice and envy had repreſented them to be. But of this he ſhould ſay the leſs,

as

as it were much better to juſtify himſelf by his actions, than by the moſt ſolemn aſſeverations and promiſes. And then complimenting my *perſon*, he aſſured me (for that he always *loved* virtue, although he had not followed it's rules as he ought) that he was ſtill more captivated with the graces of my *mind*: and would frankly own, that till he had the honour to know *me*, he had never met with an inducement ſufficient to enable him to overcome an unhappy kind of prejudice to matrimony; which had made him before impenetrable to the wiſhes and recommendations of all his relations.

You ſee, my dear, he ſcruples not to ſpeak of himſelf, as his enemies ſpeak of him. I can't ſay, but his openneſs in theſe particulars gives a credit to his other profeſſions. I ſhould eaſily, I think, detect an hypocrite: and *this* man particularly, who is ſaid to have allowed himſelf in great liberties, were he to pretend to *inſtantaneous* lights and convictions—at this time of life too—Habits, I am ſenſible, are not ſo eaſily changed. You have always joined with me in remarking, that he will ſpeak his mind with freedom, even to a degree of unpoliteneſs ſometimes; and that his very treatment of my family is a proof that he cannot make a mean court to any-body for intereſt-ſake—What pity, where there are ſuch laudable traces, that they ſhould have been ſo mired, and choaked up, as I may ſay!—We have heard, that the man's head is better than his heart: but do you really think Mr. Lovelace can have a *very* bad heart? Why ſhould not there be ſomething in *blood* in the human creature, as well as in the ignobler animals? None of his family are exceptionable—but himſelf, indeed. The characters of the ladies are admirable—But I ſhall incur the imputation I wiſh to avoid. Yet what a look of cenſoriouſneſs does it carry in an unſparing friend, to take one to taſk for doing that juſtice, and making thoſe charitable inferences in favour of a particular perſon, which one ought without ſcruple to do, and to make, in the behalf of any other man living?

He then again preſſed me to receive a letter of offered protection from Lady Betty. He ſaid, that people of birth ſtood a little too much upon punctilio; as people of virtue alſo did: (But indeed birth, worthily lived up to, was virtue; virtue, birth; the inducements to a decent punctilio the ſame; the origin of both, one) [How came this notion from him!]—Elſe, Lady Betty would write to *me*. But ſhe would be willing to be firſt apprized, that her offer would be well received—as it would have the appearance of being made againſt the liking of one part of my family; and which nothing would induce her to make but the degree of unworthy perſecution which I actually laboured under, and had reaſon further to apprehend.

I told him, that, however greatly I thought myſelf obliged to Lady Betty Lawrance, if this offer came from herſelf; yet it was eaſy to ſee to what it led. It might look like vanity in me perhaps to ſay, That this urgency in him, on this occaſion, wore the face of art, in order to engage me into meaſures from which I might not eaſily extricate myſelf. I ſaid, that I ſhould not be affected by the ſplendor of even a royal title. *Goodneſs*, I thought, was *greatneſs:* that the excellent characters of the ladies of his family weighed more with me, than the conſideration that they were half-ſiſters to Lord M. and daughters of an earl; that he would not have found encouragement from me, had my friends been *conſenting* to his addreſs, if he had only a *mere* relative merit to thoſe ladies; ſince, in that caſe, the very reaſons that made me admire *them*, would have been ſo many objections to their *kinſman*.

I then aſſured him, that it was with infinite concern, that I had found myſelf drawn into an epiſtolary correſpondence with him; eſpecially ſince that correſpondence had been prohibited:—and the only agreeable uſe I could think of making of this unexpected and undeſired interview, was, to let him know, that I ſhould from henceforth think myſelf obliged to diſcontinue it. And I hoped, that he would not have the *thought* of engaging me to carry it on by menacing my relations.

There was light enough to diſtinguiſh that he looked very grave upon this. He ſo much valued my *free* choice, he ſaid, and my *unbiaſſed* favour, (ſcorning to ſet himſelf upon a foot with Solmes in the compulſory methods uſed in that man's behalf)

that he should hate himself, were he capable of a view of intimidating me by so very poor a method. But, nevertheless, there were two things to be considered: first, that the continual outrages he was treated with; the spies set over him, one of which he had detected; the indignities all his family were likewise treated with; as also, myself; avowedly in malice to him, or he should not presume to take upon himself to resent for me, without my leave [The artful wretch saw he would have lain open here, had he not thus guarded]—All these considerations called upon him to shew a proper resentment; and he would leave it to me to judge, whether it would be reasonable for him, as a man of spirit, to bear such insults, if it were not for my sake. I would be pleased to consider, in the next place, whether the situation I was in (a prisoner in my father's house, and my whole family determined to compel me to marry a man unworthy of me; and that speedily, and whether I consented or not) admitted of delay in the preventive measures he was desirous to put me upon, *in the last resort only*. Nor was there a necessity, he said, if I were actually in Lady Betty's protection, that I should be his, if, afterwards, I should see any-thing objectible in his conduct.

But what would the world conclude would be the end, I demanded, were I, in the last resort, as he proposed, to throw myself into the protection of *his* friends, but that it was with such a view?

And what less did the world think *now*, he asked, than that I was confined that I *might not?* 'You are to 'consider, Madam, you have not now 'an option; and to whom is it owing 'that you have not; and that you are 'in the power of those (parents why 'should I call them?) who are determined, that you shall *not* have an 'option. All I propose is, that you 'will embrace such a protection;—but 'not till you have tried every way, to 'avoid the necessity for it.

'And give me leave to say,' proceeded he, 'that if a correspondence on 'which I have founded all my hopes, 'is, at this critical conjuncture, to be 'broken off; and if you are resolved 'not to be *provided against* the worst; 'it must be plain to me, that you will 'at last yield to that worst—Worst to '*me* only—It cannot be to *you*—And '*then!*' [and he put his hand clenched to his forehead] 'how shall I bear the 'supposition? *Then* will you be that 'Solmes's!—But, by all that's sacred, 'neither he, nor your brother, nor 'your uncles, shall enjoy their triumph—Perdition seize my soul, if 'they shall!'

The man's vehemence frightened me: yet, in resentment, I would have left him; but throwing himself at my feet again, 'Leave me not thus—I beseech 'you, dearest Madam, leave me not 'thus, in despair. I kneel not, repenting of what I have vowed in such 'a case as that I have supposed. I revow it, at your feet.'—*And so he did.* 'But think not it is by way of menace, or to intimidate you to favour 'me. If your heart inclines you' [and then he arose] 'to obey your father, '(your *brother* rather) and to have 'Solmes; although I shall avenge myself on those who have insulted me, 'for their insults to myself and family; yet will I tear out my heart 'from this bosom, (if possible with my 'own hands) were it to scruple to give 'up it's ardors to a woman capable of 'such a preference.'

I told him, that he talked to me in very high language; but he might assure himself, that I never would have Mr. Solmes, (yet that this I said not in favour to him) and I had declared as much to my relations, were there not such a man as himself in the world.

Would I declare, that I would still honour him with my correspondence?—He could not bear, that, hoping to obtain *greater* instances of my favour, he should forfeit the *only one* he had to boast of.

I bid him forbear rashness or resentment to any of my family, and I would, for some time at least, till I saw what issue my present trials were likely to have, proceed with a correspondence, which, nevertheless, my heart *condemned*—

And his spirit him, the impatient creature said, interrupting me, for bearing what he did; when he considered, that the necessity of it was imposed upon him, not by *my* will, (for then he would bear it chearfully, and a thousand times more) but by creatures—And there he stopt.

I told

I told him plainly that he might thank himself (whose indifferent character, as to his morals, had given such a handle against him) for all. It was but just, that a man should be spoken evil of, who set no value upon his reputation.

He offered to vindicate himself: but I told him, I would judge him by his own rule—by his *actions*, not by his *professions*.

Were not his enemies, he said, so powerful, and so determined; and had they not already shewn their intentions in such high acts of even *cruel* compulsion; but would leave me to my choice, or to my desire of living single; he would have been content to undergo a twelvemonth's probation, or more: but he was confident, that one month would either compleat all their purposes, or render them abortive; and I best knew what hopes I had of my *father's* receding—He did not know him, if I had *any*.

I said, I would try every method, that either my duty or my influence upon any of them should suggest, before I would put myself into any other protection: and, if nothing else would do, would resign the envied estate; and that I dared to say *would*.

He was contented, he said, to abide that issue. He should be far from wishing me to embrace any other protection, but, as he had frequently said, in the last necessity. 'But, dearest creature,' said he, catching my hand with ardor, and pressing it to his lips, 'if the yielding 'up that estate will do—Resign it—and 'be mine—And I will corroborate, 'with all my soul, your resignation!'

This was not ungenerously said: but what will not these men say to obtain belief, and a power over one?

I made many efforts to go; and now it was so dark, that I began to have great apprehensions. I cannot say from his behaviour: indeed, he has a good deal raised himself in my opinion by the personal respect, even to reverence, which he paid me during the whole conference; for although he flamed out once, upon a supposition that Solmes might succeed, it was upon a supposition that would excuse passion, if anything could, you know, in a man pretending to love with fervour; although it was so levelled, that I could not avoid resenting it.

He recommended himself to my favour at parting, with great earnestness, yet with as great submission; not offering to condition any-thing with me; although he hinted his wishes for another meeting; which I forbade him ever attempting again in the same place.—And I will own to you, from whom I should be really blameable to conceal any-thing, that his arguments (drawn from the disgraceful treatment I met with) of what I *am* to expect, make me begin to apprehend, that I shall be under an obligation to be either the one man's or the other's—And if so, I fancy I shall not incur your blame, were I to say, *which* of the two it must be. You have said, which it must *not* be. But, O my dear, the single life is by far the most eligible to me: *indeed* it is. And I hope yet to be permitted to make that option.

I got back without observation: but the apprehension that I should not, gave me great uneasiness; and made me begin my letter in a greater flutter than he gave me cause to be in, except at the first seeing him; for then indeed my spirits failed me; and it was a particular felicity, that, in such a place, in such a fright, and alone with him, I fainted not away.

I should add, that having reproached him with his behaviour the last Sunday at church, he solemnly assured me, that it was not what had been represented to me: that he did not *expect* to see me there; but hoped to have an opportunity to address himself to my father, and to be permitted to attend him home. But that the good Dr. Lewen had persuaded him not to attempt speaking to any of the family, at that time; observing to him the emotions into which his presence had put every-body. He intended no pride or haughtiness of behaviour, he assured me; and that the attributing such to him was the effect of that ill-will which he had the mortification to find insuperable: adding, that when he bowed to my mother, it was a compliment he intended generally to every one in the pew, as well as to *her*, whom he sincerely venerated.

If he may be believed, (and I should think he would not have come purposely to defy my family, yet expect favour from me) one may see, my dear, the force of hatred, which misrepresents all things—yet why should Shorey (except

cept officiously to please her principals) make a report in his disfavour? He told me, that he would appeal to Dr. Lewen for his justification on this head; adding, that the whole conversation between the doctor and him turned upon his desire to attempt to reconcile himself to us all, in the *face of the church*; and upon the doctor's endeavouring to dissuade him from making such a publick overture, till he knew how it would be accepted. But to what purpose his appeal, when I am debarred from seeing that good man, or any one who would advise me what to do in my present difficult situation!

I fancy, my dear, however, that there would hardly be a guilty person in the world, were each *suspected* or *accused* person to tell his or her own story, and be allowed any degree of credit.

I have written a very long letter.

To be so particular as you require in subjects of conversation, it is impossible to be short.

I will add to it only the assurance, that I am, and ever will be, *your affectionate and faithful friend and servant*,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

You'll be so good, my dear, as to remember, that the date of your last letter to me, was the 9th.

LETTER XXXVII.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

SUNDAY MARCH 19.

I Beg your pardon, my dearest friend, for having given you occasion to remind me of the date of my last. I was willing to have before me as much of the workings of your *wise* relations as possible; being verily persuaded, that one side or the other would have yielded by this time: and then I should have had some degree of certainty to found my observations upon. And indeed what can I write that I have not already written?—You know, that I can do nothing but rave at your stupid persecutors: and that you don't like. I have advised you to resume your own estate: that you won't do. You cannot bear the thoughts of having their Solmes: and Lovelace is resolved you shall be his, let who will say to the contrary. I think you must be either the one man's or the other's. Let us see what their *next* step will be.

As to Lovelace, while he tells his own story, (having also behaved so handsomely on his intrusion in the woodhouse; and intended so well at church) who can say that the man is the *least* blameworthy?—*Wicked people!* to combine against so *innocent* a man!—But, as I said, 'Let us see what *their next* step 'will be,' and what course *you* will take upon it; and then we may be the more enlightened.

As to your change of stile to your uncles, and brother and sister, since they were so fond of attributing to you a regard for Lovelace, and would not be persuaded to the contrary; and since you only strengthened their arguments against yourself by denying it; you did but just as I would have done, in giving way to their suspicions, and trying what that would do—But if—But if—Pray, my dear, indulge me a little—You *yourself* think it was necessary to apologize to *me* for that change of stile to *them*—And till you will speak out like a friend to her *unquestionable* friend, I must teaze you a little—Let it run therefore; for it will run—

If, then, there be not a reason for this change of stile, which you have not thought fit to give me, be so good as to watch, as I once before advised you, how the cause for it will come on—Why should it be permitted to steal upon you, and you know nothing of the matter?

When we get a great cold, we are apt to puzzle ourselves to find out when it began, or how we got it; and when that is accounted for, down we sit contented, and let it have it's course; or, if it be very troublesome, take a sweat, or use other means to get rid of it—So, my dear, before the malady you wot of, yet wot *not* of, grows so importunate, as that you must be obliged to sweat it out, let me advise you to mind how it comes on. For I am persuaded, as surely as that I am now writing to *you*, that the indiscreet violence of your friends on one hand, and the insinuating address of Lovelace on the other, (if the man be not a greater fool than any-body thinks him) will effectually bring it to this, and do all his work for him.

But let it—If it must be Lovelace or Solmes,

Solmes, the choice cannot admit of debate. Yet if all be true that is reported, I should prefer almost any of your other lovers to either; unworthy as *they* also are. But who can be worthy of a Clarissa?

I wish you are not *indeed* angry with me for harping so much on one string. I must own, that I should think myself inexcusable so to do, (the rather, as I am bold enough to imagine it a point out of all doubt from fifty places in your letters, were I to labour the proof) if you would ingenuously own—

'Own what?' you'll say. 'Why, 'my Anna Howe, I hope, you don't 'think, that I am already in love!'

No, to be sure! How can your Anna Howe have such a thought?—What then shall we call it? You have helped me to a phrase.—A *conditional kind of liking!*—that's it.—O my friend! Did I not know how much you despise prudery; and that you are too young, and too lovely, to be a prude—

But, avoiding such hard names, let me tell you one thing, my dear, (which nevertheless I have told you before) and that is *this*; that I shall think I have reason to be highly displeased with you, when you write to me, you endeavour to keep from me any secret of your heart.

Let me add, that if you would clearly and implicitly tell me, how far Lovelace *has*, or has *not*, a hold in your affections, I could better advise you what to do, than at present I can. You, who are so famed for *prescience*, as I may call it; and than whom no young lady ever had stronger pretensions to a share of it; have had, no doubt, reasonings in your heart about him, supposing you *were* to be one day his; [no doubt but you have had the same in Solmes's case: whence the ground for the hatred of the one; and for the *conditional liking* of the other] will you tell me, my dear, what you have thought of Lovelace's *best* and of his *worst?*—How far eligible for the *first*; and how far rejectible for the *last?*—Then weighing both parts in opposite scales, we shall see which is likely to preponderate; or rather which *does* preponderate. Nothing less than the knowledge of the inmost recesses of your heart can satisfy my love and my friendship. Surely, you are not afraid to trust *yourself* with a secret of this nature: if you are, then you may the *more* allowably doubt *me*. But I dare say, you will not own either—Nor is there, I hope, cause for either.

Be pleased to observe one thing, my dear, that whenever I have given myself any of those airs of raillery, which have seemed to make you look about you, (when, likewise, your case may call for a more serious turn from a sympathizing friend) it has not been upon those passages which are written, though perhaps not *intended*, with such explicitness [don't be alarmed, my dear!] as leaves little cause to doubt: but only when you affect reserve; when you give new words for common things; when you come with your *curiosities*, with your *conditional likings*, and with your PRUDE-encies, [mind how I spell the word] in a case that with every other person defies all prudence—Overt acts of treason all these, against the sovereign friendship we have avowed to each other!

Remember, that you found *me* out in a moment. You challenged me. I owned directly, that there was only my pride between the man and me; for I could not endure, I told you, to think it in the power of any fellow living to give me a moment's uneasiness. And then my man, as I have elsewhere said, was not such a one as yours: so I had reason to impute full as much to my own inconsideration, as to his *power* over me: nay, *more*. But still more to *yours*. For you reasoned me out of the *curiosity* first; and when the liking was brought to be *conditional*—why then, you know, I *throbbed* no more about him.

O! *pray now*, as you say, now I have mentioned that my fellow was not such a charming fellow as yours, let Miss Biddulph, Miss Lloyd, Miss Campion, and me, have your opinion, how far *figure* ought to engage us: with a view to your own case, however—*Mind that*—as Mr. Tony says—And whether *at all*, if the man be vain of it; since, as you observe in a former, that vanity is a *flop-short pride* in such a one, that would make one justly doubt the *worthiness of his interior*. You, our pattern, so lovely in feature, so graceful in person, have none of it; and have therefore with the *best* grace always held, that it is not excusable even in a woman.

You

You must know, that this subject was warmly debated among us in our last conversation: and Miss Lloyd wished me to write to you upon it for your opinion; to which, in every debated case, we always paid the greatest deference. I hope you will not be so much engrossed by your more weighty cares, as not to have freedom of spirits enough to enter upon the task.—You know how much we all admire your opinion on such topicks; which ever produces something new and instructive, as you handle the subjects. And pray tell us, to what you think it owing, that your man seems so careful to adorn that self-adorned person of his! yet so manages, that one cannot for one's heart think him a coxcomb?—Let this question, and the above tasks, divert, and not displease you, my dear.—One subject, though ever so important, could never yet engross your capacious mind. If they *should* displease you, you must recollect the many instances of my impertinence which you have forgiven, and then say, 'This is a mad girl—But yet I love her!' —And she is my own'

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XXXVIII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

MONDAY, MARCH 20.

YOUR last so sensibly affects me, that I must postpone every other consideration, however weighty, to reply to it: and this I will do very distinctly, and with all the openness of heart which our mutual friendship demands.

But let me observe, in the first place, *gratefully* observe, That if I have in *fifty passages* of my letters given you such *undoubted* proofs of my value for Mr. Lovelace, that you have spared me for the sake of my *explicitness*, it is acting by me with a generosity worthy of yourself.

But lives the man, think you, who is so very bad, that he does not give even a doubting mind reason at *one* time to be better pleased with him than at *another*? And when that reason offers, is it not just to express one's self accordingly? I would do the man who addresses me as much *justice*, as if he did *not* address me: it has such a look of tyranny, it appears so ungenerous, methinks, in our sex, to use a man worse for his respect to us, (no other cause for disrespect occurring) that I would not by any means be that person who should do so.

But, although I may intend no more than justice, it will perhaps be difficult to hinder those who know the man's views, from construing it as a partial favour: and especially if the eager-eyed observer has been formerly touched herself, and would triumph that her friend had been no more able to escape than she. Noble minds, emulative of perfection, (and yet the passion properly directed, I do not take to be an *imperfection* neither) may be allowed a little generous envy, I think.

If I meant by this a reflection, by way of revenge, it is but a revenge, my dear, in the *soft* sense of the word. I love, as I have told you, your pleasantry. Although at the time your reproof may pain me a little; yet, on recollection, when I find in it more of the cautioning friend, than of the satirizing observer, I shall be all gratitude upon it. All the business will be this; I shall be sensible of the pain in the present letter perhaps; but I shall thank you in the next, and ever after.

In this way, I hope, my dear, you will account for a little of that sensibility which you will find above, and perhaps still more, as I proceed.—You frequently remind me, by an excellent *example*, your own to *me*, that I must not spare *you!*

I am not conscious, that I have written any-thing of this man, that has not been more in his dispraise than in his favour. Such *is* the man, that I think I must have been faulty, and ought to take myself to account, if I had not: but if you think otherwise, I will not put you upon *labouring the proof*, as you call it. My conduct must then have a faulty *appearance* at least, and I will endeavour to rectify it. But of this I assure you, That whatever interpretation my words were capable of, I *intended not* any reserve to you. I wrote my heart at the time—If I had had thoughts of disguising it, or been conscious that there was *reason* for doing so, perhaps I had not given you the opportunity of remarking upon my *curiosity* after his relations esteem for me; nor upon my

conditional

conditional liking, and such-like. All I intended by the first, I believe, I honestly told you at the time: to that letter I therefore refer, whether it make for me, or against me; and by the other, that I might bear in mind what it became a person of my sex and character to *be* and to *do*, in such an unhappy situation, where the imputed love is thought an undutiful, and therefore a criminal passion; and where the supposed object of it is a man of faulty morals too. And I am sure you will excuse my desire of appearing at those times the person I ought to be; had I no other view in it but to merit the continuance of your good opinion.

But that I may acquit myself of having reserves—O, my dear, I must here break off!—

LETTER XXXIX.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

MONDAY, MARCH 20.

THIS letter will account to you, my dear, for my abrupt breaking off in the answer I was writing to yours of yesterday; and which, possibly, I shall not be able to finish, and send you, till to-morrow or next day; having a great deal to say to the subjects you put to me in it. What I am now to give you are the particulars of another effort made by my friends, through the good Mrs. Norton.

It seems they had sent to her yesterday, to be here this day, to take their instructions, and to try what *she* could do with me. It would, at least, I suppose they thought, have this effect; to render me inexcusable with *her*; or to let *her* see, that there was no room for the expostulations she had often wanted to make in my favour to my mother.

The declaration, that my heart was *free*, afforded them an argument to prove obstinacy and perverseness upon me; since it could be nothing else that governed me in my opposition to their wills, if I had no particular esteem for another man: and now, that I have given them reason (in order to obviate this argument) to suppose that I *have* a preference to another, they are resolved to carry their schemes into execution as soon as possible. And in order to this, they sent for this good woman, for whom they know I have even a filial regard.

She found assembled my father and mother, my brother and sister, my two uncles, and my aunt Hervey.

My brother acquainted her with all that had passed since she was last permitted to see me; with the contents of my letters avowing my regard for Mr. Lovelace, (as they all interpreted them;) with the substance of their answers to them; and with their resolutions.

My mother spoke next; and delivered herself to this effect, as the good woman told me.

After reciting how many times I had been indulged in my refusals of different men, and the pains she had taken with me, to induce me to oblige my whole family in one instance out of five or six, and my obstinacy upon it; 'O 'my good Mrs. Norton,' said the dear lady, 'could you have thought that *my* 'Clarissa and *your* Clarissa was capable of so determined an opposition to 'the will of parents so indulgent to 'her? But see what *you* can do with 'her. The matter is gone too far to be 'receded from on our parts. Her father had concluded every-thing with 'Mr. Solmes, not doubting her compliance. Such noble settlements, 'Mrs. Norton, and such advantages to 'the whole family!—In short, she has 'it in her power to lay an obligation 'upon us all. Mr. Solmes, knowing 'she has good principles, and hoping 'by his patience *now*, and good treatment *hereafter*, to engage her gratitude, and by degrees her love, is willing to overlook all!'—

[*Overlook* all, my dear! Mr. Solmes to *overlook* all! There's a word!]

'So, Mrs. Norton, if you are convinced 'that it is a child's duty to submit to 'her parents authority, in the most 'important point as well as in the least, 'I beg you will try *your* influence over 'her: *I* have none; her *father* has 'none; her *uncles* neither; although it 'is her apparent interest to oblige us 'all; for, on that condition, her grandfather's estate is not half of what, 'living and dying, is purposed to be 'done for her. If any-body can prevail with her, it is *you*; and I hope 'you will *heartily* enter upon this 'task.'

The good woman asked, Whether she

was permitted to expostulate with them upon the occasion, before she came up to me?

My arrogant brother told her, she was sent for to expostulate with his *sister*, and not with *them*. 'And *this*, 'Goody Norton,' [she is always *Goody* with him!] 'you may tell her, that the 'treaty with Mr. Solmes is concluded: 'that nothing but her compliance with 'her duty is wanting; of consequence, 'that there is no room for *your* expostulation, or *hers* either.'

'Be assured of this, Mrs. Norton,' said my father, in an angry tone, 'that 'we will not be baffled by her. We 'will not appear like fools in this matter, and as if we had no authority over 'our own daughter. We will not, in 'short, be bullied out of our child by 'a cursed rake, who had like to have 'killed our only son!—And so she had 'better make a merit of her obedience: 'for comply she shall, if I live; independent as she thinks my father's indiscreet bounty has made her of me, 'her father. Indeed, since that, she has 'never been what she was before. An 'unjust bequest!—And it is likely to 'prosper accordingly!—But if she marry that vile Lovelace, I will litigate 'every shilling with her: tell her so; 'and that the will *may* be set aside, and '*shall*.'

My uncles joined, with equal heat.

My brother was violent in his declarations.

My sister put in with vehemence, on the same side.

My aunt Hervey was pleased to say, There was no article so proper for parents to govern in as this of marriage: and it was very fit, mine should be obliged.

Thus instructed, the good woman came up to me. She told me all that had passed, and was very earnest with me to comply; and so much justice did she to the task imposed upon her, that I more than once thought, that her own opinion went with theirs. But when she saw what an immoveable aversion I had to the man, she lamented with me their determined resolution: and then examined into the sincerity of my declaration, that I would gladly compound with them by living single. Of this being satisfied, she was so convinced that this offer, which, carried into execution, would exclude Lovelace effectually, *ought* to be accepted, that she would go down, (although I told her it was what I had tendered over-and-over to no purpose) and undertake to be guaranty for me on that score.

She went accordingly; but soon returned in tears; being used harshly for urging this alternative—They had a *right* to my obedience upon their own terms, they said: my proposal was an artifice, only to gain time; nothing but marrying Mr. Solmes *should* do; they had told me so before; they should not be at rest till it was done; for they knew what an interest Lovelace had in my heart; I had as good as owned it in my letters to my uncles, and brother and sister, although I had most disingenuously declared otherwise to my mother. I depended, they said, upon *their* indulgence, and my *own power* over them: they would not have banished me from their presence, if they had not known that their consideration for *me* was greater than mine for *them*. And they *would* be obeyed, or I never should be restored to their favour, let the consequence be what it would.

My brother thought fit to tell the good woman, that her whining nonsense did but harden me. There was a perverseness, he said, in female minds, a tragedy-pride, that would make a romantick young creature, such a one as me, risk any-thing to obtain pity. I was of an age, and a turn [the insolent said] to be fond of a lover-like distress: and my grief (which she pleaded) would never break my heart; I should sooner break that of the best and most indulgent of mothers. He added, that she might once more go up to me: but that, if she prevailed not, he should suspect, that the man they all hated had found a way to attach *her* to his interest.

Every-body blamed him for this unworthy reflection; which greatly affected the good woman. But, nevertheless, he said, and nobody contradicted him, that if she could not prevail upon her *sweet child*, [as it seems she had fondly called me] she had best withdraw to her own home, and there tarry till she was sent for; and so leave her *sweet child* to her father's management.

Sure nobody ever had so insolent, so hard hearted a brother, as I have! So much resignation to be expected from

me!

me! So much arrogance, and to so good a woman, and of so fine an understanding, to be allowed in him!

She nevertheless told him, that however she might be ridiculed for speaking of the sweetness of my disposition, she must take upon her to say, that there never was a sweeter in the sex: and that she had ever found, that by mild methods, and gentleness, I might at any time be prevailed upon, even in points against my own judgment and opinion.

My aunt Hervey hereupon said, It was worth while to consider what Mrs. Norton said: and that she had sometimes allowed *herself* to doubt, whether I had been *begun* with by such methods as generous tempers are only to be influenced by, in cases where their hearts are supposed to be opposite to the will of their friends.

She had both my brother and sister upon her for this: who referred to my mother, whether she had not treated me with an indulgence that had hardly any example?

My mother said, she must own, that no indulgence had been wanting from *her*: but she must needs say, and had *often* said it, that the reception I met with on my return from Miss-Howe, and the manner in which the proposal of Mr. Solmes was made to me, (which was such as left nothing to my choice) and before I had had an opportunity to converse with him, were not what she had by any means approved of.

She was silenced, you will guess by whom—with, 'My dear!—my dear!—'You have *ever* something to say, some-'thing to palliate, for this rebel of a 'girl!—Remember her treatment of 'you, of me!—Remember, that the 'wretch, whom we so justly hate, would 'not dare to persist in his purposes, but 'for her encouragement of *him*, and 'obstinacy to *us*.—Mrs. Norton,' [angrily to her] 'go up to her once more—'And if you think gentleness will do, 'you have a commission to be gentle.—'If it will not, never make use of that 'plea again.'

'Aye, my good woman,' said my mother, 'try *your* force with her. My sister 'Hervey and I will go up to her, and 'bring her down in our hands, to receive her father's blessing, and assurances of every-body's love, if she will 'be prevailed upon: and, in that case, 'we will all love you the better for your 'good offices.'

She came up to me, and repeated all these passages with tears: but I told her, that after what had passed between us, she could not hope to prevail upon me to comply with measures so wholly my brother's; and so much to my aversion.—And then folding me to her maternal bosom, 'I leave you, my dear-'est Miss,' said she—'I leave you, be-'cause I *must*!—But let me beseech 'you to do nothing rashly; nothing 'unbecoming your character. If all 'be true that is said, Mr. Lovelace 'cannot deserve you. If you *can* com-'ply, remember it is your *duty* to com-'ply. They take not, I own, the right 'method with so generous a spirit. But 'remember, that there would not be 'any merit in your compliance, if it 'were *not* to be against your own lik-'ing. Remember also, what is ex-'pected from a character so extraordi-'nary as yours: remember, it is in 'your power to unite or disunite your 'whole family for ever. Although it 'should at *present* be disagreeable to 'you to be thus compelled, your pru-'dence, I dare say, when you consider 'the matter seriously, will enable you 'to get over all prejudices against the 'one, and all prepossessions in favour 'of the other; and then the obligation 'you will lay all your family under, 'will be not only meritorious in you, 'with regard to *them*, but in a few 'months, very probably, highly sa-'tisfactory, as well as reputable, to '*yourself*.'

'Consider, my dear Mrs. Norton,' said I, '*only* consider, that it is not a 'small thing that is insisted upon; nor 'for a short duration; it is for my *life*: 'consider too, that all this is owing to 'an over-bearing brother, who go-'verns every-body. Consider how de-'sirous I am to oblige them, if a *single life*, and breaking all correspondence 'with the man they hate because my 'brother hates him, will do it.'

'I consider every thing, my dearest 'Miss: and, added to what I have 'said, do *you* only consider, that if, 'by pursuing your *own* will, and re-'jecting *theirs*, you *should* be unhappy, 'you will be deprived of all that con-'solation which those have, who have 'been directed by their *parents*, al-

'though the event prove not anſwer-
'able to their wiſhes.

'I *muſt* go,' repeated ſhe—'your
'brother will ſay' [and ſhe wept] 'that
'I harden you by my *whining non-*
'*ſenſe*. It is indeed hard, that ſo much
'regard ſhould be paid to the *humours*
'of one child; and ſo little to the in-
'clination of another. But let me
'repeat, that it is your *duty* to ac-
'quieſce, if you *can* acquieſce: your
'father has given your brother's
'ſchemes *his* ſanction; and they are
'now *his*. Mr. Lovelace, I doubt, is
'not a man that will juſtify *your* choice
'ſo much as he will *their* diſlike. It
'is eaſy to ſee that your brother has a
'*view* in diſcrediting you with all
'your friends, with your uncles in
'particular: but for that very reaſon,
'you ſhould comply, if poſſible, in or-
'der to diſconcert his ungenerous mea-
'ſures. I will pray for you; and that
'is all I can do for you. I muſt now
'go down, and make a report, that
'you are reſolved never to have Mr.
'Solmes—Muſt I?—Conſider, my dear
'Miſs Clary—*Muſt* I?'

'Indeed you muſt!—But of this I
'do aſſure you, that I will do nothing
'to diſgrace the part you have had in
'my education. I will bear every-
'thing that ſhall be ſhort of forcing
'my hand into *his* who never can have
'any ſhare in my heart. I will try by
'patient duty, by humility, to over-
'come them. But death will I chuſe,
'in any ſhape, rather than that man.'

'I dread to go down,' ſaid ſhe,
'with ſo determined an anſwer: they
'will have no patience with me.—But
'let me leave you with one obſerva-
'tion, which I beg of you always to
'bear in mind.

'That perſons of prudence, and
'diſtinguiſhed talents, like yours, ſeem
'to be ſprinkled through the world, to
'give credit, by their example, to re-
'ligion and virtue. When ſuch per-
'ſons *wilfully* err, how great muſt be
'the fault! How ungrateful to that
'God, who bleſſed them with ſuch ta-
'lents! What a loſs likewiſe to the
'world! What a wound to virtue!—
'But this, I hope, will never be to be
'ſaid of Miſs Clariſſa Harlowe!'

I could give her no anſwer, but by my tears. And I thought, when ſhe went away, the better half of my heart went with her.

I liſtened to hear what reception ſhe would meet with below; and found it was juſt ſuch a one as ſhe had appre-hended.

'*Will* ſhe, or will ſhe *not*, be Mrs.
'Solmes? None of your whining cir-
'cumlocutions, Mrs. Norton!' [You may gueſs who ſaid this] '*Will* ſhe, or
'will ſhe *not*, comply with her parents
'will?'

This cut ſhort all ſhe was going to ſay.

'If I *muſt* ſpeak ſo briefly, Miſs
'will ſooner die, than have—'

'Any-body but Lovelace!' inter-rupted my brother.—'This, Madam—
'this, Sir—is your meek daughter!
'this is Mrs. Norton's *ſweet child!*—
'Well, Goody, you may return to
'your own habitation. I am empow-
'ered to forbid you to have any corre-
'ſpondence with this perverſe girl for
'a month to come, as you value the
'favour of our whole family, or of
'any individual of it.'

And ſaying this, uncontradicted by any-body, he himſelf ſhewed her to the door—No doubt, with all that air of cruel inſult, which the haughty rich can put on to the unhappy low, who have not pleaſed them.

So here, my dear Miſs Howe, am I deprived of the advice of one of the moſt prudent and conſcientious women in the world, were I to have ever ſo much occaſion for it.

I might indeed write (as I preſume, under your cover) and receive *her* an-ſwers to what I ſhould write. But ſhould ſuch a correſpondence be charged upon her, I know ſhe would not be guilty of a falſhood for the world; nor even of an equivocation: and ſhould ſhe own it after this prohibition, ſhe would forfeit my mother's favour for ever. And in my dangerous fever, ſome time ago, I engaged my mother to promiſe me, that, if I died before I could do any-thing for the good wo-man, ſhe would ſet her above want for the reſt of her life, ſhould her eyes fail her, or ſickneſs befall her, and ſhe could not provide for herſelf, as ſhe now ſo prettily does by her fine needle-works.

What meaſures will they fall upon

next?—Will they not recede when they find that it must be a rooted antipathy, and nothing else, that could make a temper not naturally inflexible, so sturdy?

Adieu, my dear. Be you happy!—To *know* that it is in your power to be so, is all that seems wanting to make you so.

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER XL.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

[IN CONTINUATION OF THE SUBJECT IN LETTER XXXVIII.]

I Will now, though midnight, (for I have no sleep in my eyes) resume the subject I was forced so abruptly to quit; and will obey yours, Miss Lloyd's, Miss Campion's, and Miss Biddulph's call, with as much temper as my divided thoughts will admit. The dead stillness of this solemn hour will I hope contribute to calm my disturbed mind.

In order to acquit myself of so heavy a charge as that of having reserves to so dear a friend, I will acknowledge (and I thought I had over and over) that it is owing to my particular situation, if Mr. Lovelace appears to me in a tolerable light: and I take upon me to say, that had they opposed him to a man of sense, of virtue, of generosity; one who enjoyed his fortune with credit; who had a tenderness in his nature for the calamities of others, which would have given a moral assurance, that he would have been still less wanting in grateful returns to an obliging spirit—had they opposed such a man as this to Mr. Lovelace, and been as earnest to have me married, as now they are, I do not know myself, if they would have had reason to tax me with that invincible obstinacy which they lay to my charge. And this whatever had been the *figure* of the man; since the *heart* is what we women should judge by in the choice we make, as the best security for the party's good behaviour in every relation of life.

But, situated as I am, thus persecuted and driven; I own to you, that I have now-and-then had a little more difficulty than I wished for, in passing by Mr. Lovelace's tolerable qualities, to keep up my dislike to him for his others.

You say, I must have argued with myself in his favour, and in his disfavour, on a supposition, that I might possibly be one day his. I own that I have: and thus called upon by my dearest friend, I will set before you both parts of the argument.

And first, *what occurred to me in his favour*.

At his introduction into our family, his negative virtues were insisted upon; —he was no gamester; no horse-racer; no fox-hunter; no drinker. My poor aunt Hervey had, in confidence, given us to apprehend much disagreeable evil (especially to a wife of the least delicacy) from a wine lover: and common sense instructed us, that sobriety in a man is no small point to be secured, when so many mischiefs happen daily from excess. I remember, that my sister made the most of this favourable circumstance in his character while she had any hopes of him.

He was never thought to be a niggard; not even ungenerous: nor when his conduct came to be enquired into, an extravagant, a squanderer; his pride [So far was it a laudable pride] secured him from that. Then he was ever ready to own his errors. He was no jester upon sacred things: poor Mr. Wyerley's fault; who seemed to think, that there was wit in saying bold things, which would shock a serious mind. His conversation with *us* was always unexceptionable; even chastely so; which, be his actions what they would, shewed him capable of being influenced by *decent* company; and that he might probably therefore be a *led* man, rather than a *leader*, in other company. And one late instance, so late as last Saturday evening, has raised him not a little in my opinion, with regard to this point of good (and at the same time, of manly) behaviour.

As to the advantage of birth, that is of his side, above any man who has been found out for me. If we may judge by that expression of his, which you were pleased with at the time; That upon *true* quality, and *hereditary* distinction, if good sense were not wanting, *honour sat as easy as his glove*; That, with *as* familiar an air, was his familiar expression; while none but the prosperous

prosperous upstart, MUSHROOMED into rank (another of his peculiars) was arrogantly proud of it.—If, I say, we may judge of him by this, we shall conclude in his favour, that he knows what sort of behaviour is to be expected from persons of birth, whether he act up to it or not. Conviction is half way to amendment.

His fortunes in possession are handsome; in expectation, splendid: so nothing need be said on that subject.

But it is impossible, say some, that he should make a tender or kind husband. Those who are for imposing upon me such a man as Mr. Solmes, and by methods so violent, are not intitled to make this objection. But now, on this subject, let me tell you how I have argued with myself—For still you must remember, that I am upon the extenuating part of his character.

A great deal of the treatment a wife may expect from him, will possibly depend upon herself. Perhaps she must *practise* as well as *promise* obedience, to a man so little used to controul; and must be careful to oblige. And what husband expects not this?—The *more* perhaps if he had not reason to assure himself of the preferable love of his wife before she became such. And how much easier and pleasanter to obey the man of her choice, if he should be even unreasonable sometimes, than one she would not have had, could she have avoided it? Then, I think, as the men were the framers of the matrimonial office, and made *obedience* a part of the woman's vow, she ought not, even in *policy*, to shew him, that she can break through *her* part of the contract, (however lightly she may think of the instance) lest *he* should take it into his head (himself is judge) to think as lightly of other points, which she may hold more important—But indeed no point so solemnly vowed can be slight.

Thus principled, and *acting* accordingly, what a wretch must that husband be, who could treat such a wife brutally!—Will Lovelace's *wife* be the only person, to whom he will not pay the grateful debt of civility and good-manners? He is allowed to be brave: who ever knew a brave man, if a man of *sense*, an universally base man? And how much the gentleness of our sex, and the manner of our training up and education, make us need the protection of the brave, and the countenance of the generous, let the general approbation which we are all so naturally inclined to give to men of that character, testify.

At worst, will he confine me prisoner to my chamber? Will he deny me the visits of my dearest friend, and forbid me to correspond with her? Will he take from me the mistressly management, which I had not faultily discharged? Will he set a servant over me, with licence to insult me? Will he, as he has not a *sister*, permit his cousins Montague, or would either of those ladies *accept* of a permission, to insult and tyrannize over me?—It cannot be.—'Why then,' think I often, 'do 'you tempt me, O my cruel friends, 'to try the difference?'

And then has the secret pleasure intruded itself, to be able to reclaim such a man to the paths of virtue and honour: to be a *secondary* means, if I were to be his, of saving him, and preventing the mischiefs so enterprizing a creature might otherwise be guilty of, if he be such a one.

When I have thought of him in these lights, (and that as a man of sense he will sooner see his errors, than another) I own to you that I have had some difficulty to avoid taking the path they so violently endeavour to make me shun: and all that command of my passions which has been attributed to me as my greatest praise, and, in so young a creature, as my distinction, has hardly been sufficient for me.

And let me add, that the favour of his relations (all but himself unexceptionable) has made a good deal of additional weight, thrown into the same scale.

But now, in his disfavour. When I have reflected upon the prohibition of my parents; the giddy appearance, disgraceful to our sex, that such a preference would have; that there is no manner of likelihood, enflamed by the rencounter, and upheld by art and ambition on my brother's side, that ever the animosity will be got over; that I must therefore be at perpetual variance with all my own family; that I must go to *him*, and to *his*, as an obliged and half fortuned person; that his aversion to them all is as strong as theirs to him; that his whole family are hated for his sake; they hating ours in

in return: that he has a very immoral character as to women; that knowing this, it is a high degree of impurity to think of joining in wedlock with such a man; that he is young, unbroken, his passions unsubdued; that he is violent in his temper, yet artful; I am afraid vindictive too; that such an husband might unsettle me in all my own principles, and hazard my future hopes; that his own relations, two excellent aunts, and an uncle, from whom he has such large expectations, have no influence upon him; that what tolerable qualities he has, are founded more in pride than in virtue; that allowing, as he does, the excellency of moral precepts, and believing the doctrine of future rewards and punishments, he can live as if he despised the one, and defied the other; the probability that the taint arising from such free principles, may go down into the manners of posterity; that I knowing these things, and the importance of them, should be more inexcusable than one who knows them not, since an error *against* judgment is worse, infinitely worse, than an error *in* judgment.—Reflecting upon these things, I cannot help conjuring you, my dear, to pray *with* me, and to pray *for* me, that I may not be pushed upon such indiscreet measures, as will render me inexcusable to myself: for that is the test, after all. The world's opinion ought to be but a secondary consideration.

I have said in his praise, that he is extremely ready to *own his errors:* but I have sometimes made a great drawback upon this article, in his disfavour; having been ready to apprehend, that this ingenuousness may possibly be attributable to two causes, neither of them, by any means, creditable to him. The one, that his vices are so much his masters, that he *attempts* not to conquer them; the other, that he may think it policy, to give up *one half* of his character, to save the *other*, when the *whole* may be blameable: by this means, silencing by acknowledgment the objections he cannot answer; which may give him the praise of ingenuousness, when he can obtain no other; and when the *challenged* proof might bring out, upon discussion, other evils. These, you will allow, are severe constructions; but every-thing his enemies say of him cannot be false.

I will proceed by-and-by.

* *

SOMETIMES we have both thought him one of the most undesigning *merely* witty men we ever knew; at other times one of the deepest creatures we ever conversed with. So that when in one visit we have imagined we fathomed him, in the next he has made us ready to give him up as impenetrable. This impenetrableness, my dear, is to be put among the shades in his character.—Yet, upon the whole, you have been so far of his party, that you have contested, that his principal fault is over-frankness, and too much regardlessness of appearances, and that he is too giddy to be very artful: you would have it, that at *the time* he says any thing good, he means what he speaks; that his variableness and levity are constitutional, owing to sound health, and to a soul and body [that was your observation] fitted for and pleased with each other. And hence you concluded, that could this *consentaneousness* [as you call it] of corporal and animal faculties be pointed by discretion; that is to say, could his vivacity be confined within the pale of *but* moral obligations; he would be far from being rejectible as a companion for life.

But I used then to say, and I still am of opinion, that he wants a *heart:* and if he does, he wants every-thing. A wrong *head* may be convinced, may have a right turn given it: but who is able to give a *heart*, if a heart be wanting? Divine Grace, working a miracle, or next to a miracle, can only change a bad heart. Should not one fly the man who is but *suspected* of such a one? What, O what, do parents do, when they endeavour to force a child's inclination, but make her think better than otherwise she would think of a man obnoxious to themselves, and perhaps whose character will not stand examination?

I have said, that I think Mr. Lovelace a vindictive man: upon my word, I have sometimes doubted, whether his perseverance in his addresses to me has not been the more obstinate, since he has found himself so disagreeable to my friends. From that time I verily think he has been the more fervent in them; yet courts them not, but sets them at defiance. For this indeed he pleads disinterestedness; [I am sure he cannot

politeness]

politeneſs] and the more plauſibly, as he is apprized of the ability they have to make it worth his while to court them. It is true he has declared, and with too much reaſon, (or there would be no bearing him) that the loweſt ſubmiſſions on his part would not be accepted; and to oblige me, has offered to ſeek a reconciliation with them, if I would give him hope of ſucceſs.

As to his behaviour at church, the Sunday before laſt, I lay no ſtreſs upon that, becauſe I doubt there was too much *outward pride* in his *intentional humility*, or Shorey, who is not his enemy, could not have miſtaken it.

I do not think him ſo deeply learned in human nature, or in ethicks, as ſome have thought him. Don't you remember how he ſtared at the following trite obſervations, which every moraliſt could have furniſhed him with? Complaining as he did, in a half-menacing ſtrain, of the obloquies raiſed againſt him—That if he were innocent, he ſhould deſpiſe the obloquy: if not, revenge would not wipe off his guilt.—That nobody ever thought of turning a ſword into a ſponge!—That it was in his own power by reformation of an error laid to his charge by an enemy, to make that enemy one of his beſt friends; and (which was the nobleſt revenge in the world) *againſt his will*; ſince an enemy would not *wiſh* him to be without the faults he taxed him with.

But the *intention*, he ſaid, was the wound.

How ſo, I aſked him, when *that* cannot wound without the *application?* That the adverſary only held the ſword: he himſelf pointed it to his breaſt—And why ſhould he mortally reſent that malice, which he might be the better for as long as he lived?—What could be the reading he has been ſaid to be maſter of, to wonder, as he did, at theſe obſervations?

But, indeed, he muſt take pleaſure in revenge; and yet holds others to be inexcuſable for the ſame fault. He is not, however, the only one who can ſee how truly blameable thoſe errors are in another, which they hardly think ſuch in themſelves.

From theſe conſiderations; from theſe *over-balances*; it was, that I ſaid, in a former, that I would not be in love with this man for the world: and it was going further than prudence would warrant, when I was for compounding with you, by the words *conditional liking*; which you ſo humouſly rally.

Well, but, methinks you ſay, what is all this to the purpoſe? This is ſtill but reaſoning: but, if you *are* in love, you *are*; and love, like the vapours, is the deeper rooted for having no ſufficient cauſe aſſignable for it's hold. And ſo you call upon me again, to have no reſerves, and ſo-forth.

Why then, my dear, if you will have it, I think, that, with all his preponderating faults, I like him better than I ever thought I ſhould like him; and, thoſe faults conſidered, better perhaps than *I ought* to like him. And I believe, it is poſſible for the perſecution I labour under, to induce me to like him ſtill more—Eſpecially while I can recollect to his advantage our laſt interview, and as every day produces ſtronger inſtances of *tyranny*, I will call it, on the other ſide.—In a word, I will frankly own, (ſince you cannot think any-thing I ſay too explicit) that were he *now* but a moral man, I would prefer him to all the men I ever ſaw.

So that this is but *conditional liking* ſtill, you'll ſay.—Nor, I hope, is it more. I never was in *love*, as it is called; and whether this be *it*, or not, I muſt ſubmit to *you*. But will venture to think it, if it be, no ſuch *mighty* monarch, no ſuch unconquerable power, as I have heard it repreſented; and it muſt have met with greater encouragement than I think I have given it, to be abſolutely unconquerable—Since I am perſuaded, that I could yet, without a *throb*, moſt willingly give up the *one* man to get rid of the *other*.

But now to be a little more ſerious with you: if, my dear, my particularly unhappy ſituation *had* driven (or *led*, if you pleaſe) me into a *liking* of the man; and if that liking *had*, in your opinion, inclined me to *love* him; ſhould *you*, whoſe mind is ſuſceptible of the moſt friendly impreſſions; who have ſuch high notions of the delicacy which ought to be obſerved by our ſex in theſe matters; and who actually *do* enter ſo deeply into the diſtreſſes of one you love—ſhould *you* have puſhed ſo far that unhappy friend on ſo very nice a ſubject?—Eſpecially, when I aimed not (as you could *prove by fifty* inſtances, it ſeems) to guard *againſt being found out*. Had you raillied me by word of mouth

mouth in the manner you do, it might have been more in character; especially, if your friend's distresses had been surmounted; and if she had affected prudish airs in revolving the subject: but to sit down to *write* it, as methinks I see you, with a gladdened eye, and with all the archness of exultation—Indeed, my dear, (and I take notice of it, rather for the sake of your own generosity, than for my sake; for, as I have said, I love your raillery) it is not so *very* pretty; the delicacy of the subject, and the delicacy of your own mind, considered.

I lay down my pen here, that you may consider of it a little, if you please.

* *

I RESUME, to give you my opinion of the force which *figure* or *person* ought to have upon our sex: and this I shall do both *generally* as to the other sex, and *particularly* as to this man; whence you will be able to recollect how far my friends are in the right, or in the wrong, when they attribute a good deal of prejudice in favour of one man, and in disfavour of the other, on the score of figure. But, first, let me observe, That they see abundant reason, on comparing Mr. Lovelace and Mr. Solmes together, to believe that this *may* be a consideration with me; and therefore they believe it *is*.

There is certainly something very plausible and attractive, as well as creditable to a woman's *choice*, in *figure*. It gives a favourable impression at first sight, in which we wish to be confirmed: and if, upon further acquaintance, we find reason so to be, we are pleased with our judgment, and like the person the better, for having given us cause to compliment our own sagacity, in our first-sighted impressions. But, nevertheless, it has been generally a rule with me, to suspect a fine figure, both in man and woman; and I have had a good deal of reason to approve my rule—With regard to *men* especially; who ought to value themselves rather upon their intellectual than personal qualities. For, as to our sex, if a fine woman should be led by the opinion of the world, to be vain and conceited upon her form and features; and that to such a degree, as to have neglected the more material and more *durable* recommendations; the world will be ready to excuse her; since a pretty fool, in all she says, and in all she does, will please, we know not why.

But who would grudge this pretty fool her short day! Since, with her summer's sun, when her butterfly flutters are over, and the winter of age and furrows arrives, she will feel the just effects of having neglected to cultivate her better faculties: for then, like another Helen, she will be unable to bear the reflexion even of her own glass; and being sunk into the insignificance of a *mere old woman*, she will be entitled to the contempts which follow that character. While the *discreet matron*, who carries *up* [we will not, in such a one's case, say *down*] into advanced life, the ever-amiable character of virtuous prudence, and useful experience, finds solid veneration take place of airy admiration, and more than supply the want of it.

But for a *man* to be vain of his person, how effeminate! If such a one happens to have genius, it seldom strikes deep into intellectual subjects. His outside usually runs away with him. To adorn, and, perhaps, *intending* to adorn, to render ridiculous, that person, takes up all his attention. All he does is *personal*; that is to say, *for* himself; all he admires, *is* himself: and in spite of the correction of the stage, which so often and so justly exposes a coxcomb, he usually dwindles down, and sinks into that character; and, of consequence, becomes the scorn of one sex, and the jest of the other.

This is generally the case of your fine figures of men, and of those who value themselves on dress and outward appearance: whence it is, that I repeat, that *mere person* in a man, is a despicable consideration. But if a man, *besides* figure, has learning, and such talents, as *would* have distinguished him, whatever were his form; then indeed *person* is an addition: and if he has not run too egregiously into self-admiration, and if he has preserved his morals, he is truly a valuable being.

Mr. Lovelace has certainly taste; and, as far as I am able to determine, he has judgment in most of the polite arts. But although he has a humorous way of carrying it off, yet one may see, that he values himself not a little, both on his person and his parts, and even upon his *dress*; and yet he has so happy an ease in the latter, that it seems to be the least

part of his ſtudy. And as to the former, I ſhould hold myſelf inexcuſeable, if I were to add to his vanity by ſhewing the *leaſt regard* for what is too evidently ſo *much his*.

And now, my dear, let me aſk you; Have I come up to your expectation? If I have not, when my mind is more at eaſe, I will endeavour to pleaſe you better. For, methinks, my ſentences drag; my ſtile creeps; my imagination is ſunk; my ſpirits ſerve me not; only to tell you, That whether I have more or leſs, I am wholly devoted to the commands of my dear Miſs Howe.

P. S. The inſolent Betty Barnes has juſt now fired me anew, by reporting to me the following expreſſions of the hideous creature, Solmes—That he is *ſure* of the coy girl; and that *with little labour to himſelf*. That be I ever ſo averſe to him beforehand, he can depend upon my principles; and it would be a pleaſure to him to ſee by what pretty degrees I ſhall come to. [Horrid wretch!] That it was Sir Oliver's obſervation, who knew the world perfectly well, that *fear* was a better ſecurity than *love*, for a woman's good behaviour to her huſband; although, for his part, to ſuch a fine creature [truly] he would try what love would do; for a few weeks at leaſt: being unwilling to believe what the old knight uſed to aver, That fondneſs ſpoils more wives than it makes good.

What think you, my dear, of ſuch a wretch as this! tutored, too, by that old ſurly *miſogyniſt*, as he was deemed, Sir Oliver?

LETTER XLI.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

TUESDAY, MARCH 21.

HOW willingly would my dear mother ſhew kindneſs to me, were ſhe permitted! None of this perſecution ſhould I labour under, I am ſure, if that regard were paid to her prudence and fine underſtanding, which they ſo well deſerve. Whether owing to her, or to my aunt, or to both, that a new trial was to be made upon me, I cannot tell; but this morning her Shorey delivered into my hand the following condeſcending letter.

'MY DEAR GIRL,

'FOR ſo I muſt ſtill call you; ſince 'dear you may be to me, in every 'ſenſe of the word—We have taken 'into particular conſideration, ſome 'hints that fell yeſterday from your 'good Norton, as if we had not, at Mr. 'Solmes's firſt application, treated you 'with that condeſcenſion, wherewith 'we have in all other inſtances treated 'you. If it even *had been ſo*, my dear, 'you were not excuſeable to be wanting in *your* part, and to ſet yourſelf to 'oppoſe your father's will in a point 'into which he had entered too far, to 'recede with honour. But all yet may 'be well. On your ſingle will, my 'child, depends all our happineſs.

'Your father permits me to tell you, 'that if you now at laſt comply with 'his expectations, all paſt diſobligations ſhall be buried in oblivion, as 'if they had never been: but withal, 'that this is the laſt time that that grace 'will be offered you.

'I hinted to you, you muſt remember *, that patterns of the richeſt ſilks were ſent for. They are come. 'And as they *are* come, your father, 'to ſhew how much he is determined, 'will have me ſend them up to you. 'I could have wiſhed they might not 'have accompanied this letter—But 'there is no great matter in *that*. I 'muſt tell you, that your delicacy is 'not to be quite ſo much regarded, as 'I had once thought it deſerved to be.

'Theſe are the neweſt, as well as 'richeſt, that we could procure; anſwerable to our ſtation in the world; 'anſwerable to the fortune, additional 'to your grandfather's eſtate, deſigned 'you; and to the noble ſettlements 'agreed upon.

'Your father intends you ſix ſuits '(three of them dreſſed ſuits) at his 'own expence. You have an entire 'new ſuit; and one beſides, which I 'think you never wore but twice. As 'the new ſuit is rich, if you chuſe to 'make that one of the ſix, your father will preſent you with an hundred 'guineas in lieu.

'Mr. Solmes intends to preſent you

* See Page 65.

'with

'with a set of jewels. As you have 'your grandmother's and your own, 'if you chuse to have the former new 'set, and to make them serve, his pre-'sent will be made in money; a very 'round sum—which will be given in 'full property to yourself; besides a 'fine annual allowance for pin-money, 'as it is called. So that your objection 'against the spirit of a man you think 'worse of than it deserves, will have 'no weight; but you will be more in-'dependent than a wife of less discre-'tion than we attribute to you, per-'haps *ought* to be. You know full 'well, that I, who first and last brought 'a still larger fortune into the family 'than you will carry to Mr. Solmes, 'had not a provision made me of near 'this that we have made for you.—'Where people marry to their liking, 'terms are the least things stood upon '—Yet should I be sorry if you can-'not (to oblige us all) overcome a 'dislike.

'Wonder not, Clary, that I write 'to you thus plainly and freely upon 'this subject. Your behaviour hither-'to has been such, that we have had 'no opportunity of entering minutely 'into the subject with you. Yet, after 'all that has passed between you and 'me in conversation, and between you 'and your uncles by letter, you have 'no room to doubt what is to be the 'consequence.—Either, child, we must 'give up *our* authority, or you *your* 'humour. You cannot expect the 'one. We have all the reason in the 'world to expect the other. You know 'I have told you more than once, that 'you must resolve to have Mr. Solmes, 'or never to be looked upon as our 'child.

'The draught of the settlements you 'may see whenever you will. We 'think there can be no room for ob-'jection to any of the articles. There 'is still more in them in our family's 'favour, than was stipulated at first, 'when your aunt talked of them to 'you. More so, indeed, than we could 'have asked. If, upon perusal of them, 'you think any alteration necessary, it 'shall be made.—Do, my dear girl, 'send to me within this day or two, 'or rather *ask* me, for the perusal of 'them.

'As a certain person's appearance at 'church so lately, and what he gives 'out every-where, make us extremely 'uneasy, and as that uneasiness will 'continue while you are single, you 'must not wonder that a short day is 'intended. This day-fortnight we 'design it to be, if you have no ob-'jection to make that I shall approve 'of. But if you determine as we 'would have you, and signify it to us, 'we shall not stand with you for a week 'or so.

'Your slightliness of person may per-'haps make some think this alliance 'disparaging. But I hope you will not 'put such a personal value upon your-'self: if you do, it will indeed be the 'less wonder that *person* should weigh 'with you (however weak the consi-'deration!) in another man.

'Thus we parents, in justice, ought 'to judge: that our two daughters are '*equally* dear and valuable to us; if 'so, why should *Clarissa* think that a 'disparagement, which *Arabella* would 'not (nor *we* for her) have thought 'any, had the address been made to 'her?—You will know what I mean 'by this, without my explaining myself 'farther.

'Signify to us, now, therefore, your 'compliance with our wishes. And 'then there is an end of your confine-'ment. An act of oblivion, as I may 'call it, shall pass upon all your former 'refractoriness: and you will once 'more make us happy in you, and in 'one another. You may, in this case, 'directly come down to your father 'and me, in his study; where we will 'give you our opinions of the patterns, 'with our hearty forgiveness and bless-'ings.

'Come, be a good child, as you 'used to be, my Clarissa. I have (not-'withstanding your past behaviour, and 'the hopelessness which some have ex-'pressed in your compliance) under-'taken this one time more for you. 'Discredit not my hopes, my dear girl. 'I have promised never more to inter-'fere between your *father* and *you*, if 'this my most earnest application suc-'ceed not. I expect you down, love. 'Your father expects you down. But 'be sure don't let him see any-thing 'unchearful in your compliance. If 'you come, I will clasp you to my 'fond heart, with as much pleasure as 'ever I pressed you to it in my whole 'life. You don't know what I have

'suffered within these few weeks past; 'nor ever will be able to guess, till 'you come to be in my situation; 'which is that of a fond and indulgent 'mother, praying night and day, and 'struggling to preserve, against the at-'tempts of more ungovernable spirits, 'the peace and union of her family.

'But you know the terms. Come 'not near us, if you resolve to be undu-'tiful: but this, after what I have writ-'ten, I hope you cannot be.

'If you come directly, and, as I said, '*chearfully*, as if your heart were in 'your duty, (and you told me it was '*free*, you know) I shall then, as I 'said, give you the most tender proofs, 'how much I am *your truly affectionate* 'mother.'

Think for me, my dearest friend, how I must be affected by this letter; the contents of it are so surprizingly terrifying, yet so sweetly urged!—'O 'why,' cried I to myself, 'am I oblig-'ed to undergo this severe conflict be-'tween a command that I cannot obey, 'and language so condescendingly 'moving!—Could I have been sure of 'being struck dead at the altar before 'the ceremony had given the man I hate 'a title to my vows, I think I could 'have submitted to have been led to it. 'But to think of living *with* and liv-'ing *for* a man one abhors, what a sad 'thing is that?'

And then, how could the glare of habit and ornament be supposed any inducement to one, who has always held, that the principal view of a good wife in the adorning of her person, ought to be, to *preserve* the affection of her husband, and to *do credit* to his choice; and that she should be even fearful of attracting the eyes of *others?*—In this view, must not the very richness of the patterns add to my disgusts?—Great encouragement, indeed, to think of adorning one's self to be the wife of Mr. *Solmes!*

Upon the whole, it was not possible for me to go down upon the prescribed condition. Do you think it was?—And to *write*, if my letter would have been *read*, what could I write that would be admitted, and after what I had written and said to so little effect?

I walked backward and forward. I threw down with disdain the patterns. Now to my closet retired I; then quitting it, threw myself upon the settee; then upon this chair; then upon that; then into one window, then into another—I knew not what to do!—And while I was in this suspense, having again taken up the letter to re-peruse it, Betty came in, and reminded me, by order, that my papa and mamma waited for me in my father's study.

'Tell my mamma,' said I, 'that I 'beg the favour of seeing her here for 'one moment; or to permit me to at-'tend her any-where by herself.'

I listened at the stairs-head—'You 'see, my dear, how it is,' cried my father, very angrily: 'all your con-'descension (as your indulgence here-'tofore) is thrown away. *You blame* '*your son's violence*, as you call it;' [*I had some pleasure in hearing this*] 'but 'nothing else will do with her. You 'shall *not* see her alone. Is my pre-'sence an exception to the bold crea-'ture?'

'Tell her,' said my mother to Betty, 'she knows upon what terms she may 'come down to us. Nor will I see her 'upon any other.'

The maid brought me this answer. I had recourse to my pen and ink; but I trembled so, that I could not write, nor knew I what to say, had I had steadier fingers. At last Betty brought me these lines from my father.

'UNDUTIFUL AND PERVERSE CLA-'RISSA,

'NO condescension, I see, will move 'you. Your mother shall *not* 'see you; nor will I. Prepare, how-'ever, to obey. You know our plea-'sure. Your uncle Antony, your bro-'ther, and your sister, and your fa-'vourite Mrs. Norton, shall see the 'ceremony performed privately at your 'uncle's chapel. And when Mr. 'Solmes can introduce you to us, in 'the temper we wish to behold you in, 'we may perhaps forgive *his* wife, al-'though we never can, in any *other* 'character, our perverse daughter. As 'it will be so privately performed, 'cloaths and equipage may be provi-'ded afterwards. So prepare to go to 'your uncle's for an early day in next 'week. We will not see you till all 'is over: and we will have it over the 'sooner, in order to shorten the time 'of your deserved confinement, and 'our own trouble in contending with

'such

'such a rebel as you have been of late. 'I will hear no pleas, I will receive no 'letter, nor expostulation. Nor shall 'you hear from me any more till you 'have changed your name to my lik- 'ing. This from

'*Your incensed father.*'

If this resolution be adhered to, then will my father never see me more!—For I will never be the wife of that Solmes—I will die first!

TUESDAY EVENING.

HE, this Solmes, came hither soon after I had received my father's letter. He sent up to beg leave to wait upon me—I wonder at his assurance!

I said to Betty, who brought me this message, 'Let him restore an unhappy 'creature to her father and mother, and 'then I may hear what he has to say. 'But if my friends will not see *me* on '*his* account, I will not see *him* upon 'his *own*.'

'I hope, Miss,' said Betty, 'you 'will not send me down with this an- 'swer. He is with your papa and 'mamma.'

'I am driven to despair,' said I. 'I cannot be used worse. I will not 'see him.'

Down she went with my answer. She pretended, it seems, to be loth to repeat it: so was *commanded* out of her affected reserves, and gave it in it's full force.

O how I heard my father storm!

They were all together, it seems, in his study. My brother was for having me turned out of the house that moment, to Lovelace, and my evil destiny. My mother was pleased to put in a gentle word for me; I know not what it was; but thus she was answered—'My dear, this is the most provoking 'thing in the world in a woman of 'your good sense!—To love a rebel, 'as well as if she were dutiful. What 'encouragement for duty is this?—'Have I not loved her as well as ever 'you did? And *why* am I changed! 'Would to the Lord, your sex knew 'how to distinguish! It is plain, that 'she relies upon her power over you. 'The fond mother ever made a har- 'dened child!'

She was pleased, however, to blame Betty, as the wench owned, for giving my answer it's full force. But my father praised her for it.

The wench says, that he would have come up in his wrath, at my refusing to see Mr. Solmes, had not my brother and sister prevailed upon him to the contrary.

I wish he had!—And, were it not for his own sake, that he had killed me!

Mr. Solmes condescended [I am mightily obliged to him, truly!] to plead for me.

They are all in tumults! How it will end, I know not—I am quite weary of my life—So happy, till within these few weeks!—So miserable now!

Well, indeed, might my mother say, that I should have severe trials *.

P. S. The *idiot* [such a one am I treated like!] is *begged*, as I may say, by my brother and sister. They have desired, that I may be consigned over entirely to their management. If it be granted, [it *is* granted, on my father's part, I understand, but not *yet* on my mother's] what cruelty may I not expect from their envy, jealousy, and ill-will!—I shall soon see, by it's effects, if I am to be so consigned—This is a written intimation privately dropt in my woodhouse-walk, by my cousin Dolly Hervey. The dear girl longs to see me, she tells me: but is forbidden till she see me as Mrs. Solmes, or as consenting to be his. I will take example by *their* perseverance!—Indeed I will!

LETTER XLII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

AN angry dialogue, a scolding-bout rather, has passed between my sister and me. Did you think I could scold, my dear?

She was sent up to me, upon my refusal to see Mr. Solmes—Let loose upon me, I think!—No intention on their parts, to conciliate! It seems evident that I am given up to my brother and her, by general consent.

I will do justice to every-thing she said against me, which carried any force with it. As I ask for your approbation

* Page 76.

or

or disapprobation of my conduct, upon the facts I lay before you, I should think it the sign of a very bad cause, if I endeavoured to mislead my judge.

She began with representing to me the danger I had been in, had my father come up, as he would have done had he not been hindered—by Mr. *Solmes*, among the rest. She reflected upon my Norton, as if she encouraged me in my perverseness. She ridiculed me for my supposed esteem for Mr. Lovelace. —Was surprized that the *witty*, the *prudent*, nay, the *dutiful* and *pi—ous* [so she sneeringly pronounced the word] Clarissa Harlowe, should be so strangely fond of a profligate man, that her parents were forced to lock her up, in order to hinder her from running into his arms. 'Let me ask you, my dear,' said she, 'how you now keep your 'account of the disposition of your 'time? *How many hours* in the *twen-'ty-four* do you devote to your needle? 'How many to your prayers? How 'many to letter-writing? And how 'many to love?—I doubt, I doubt, 'my little dear,' was her arch expression, 'the latter article is like Aaron's 'rod, and swallows up all the rest!— 'Tell me; is it not so?'

To these I answered, that it was a double mortification to me to owe my safety from the effects of my father's indignation to a man I could never thank for any-thing. I vindicated the good Mrs. Norton with a warmth that was due to her merit.—With equal warmth I resented her reflections upon me on Mr. Lovelace's account. As to the disposition of my time in the twenty-four hours, I told her it would better have become her to pity a sister in distress, than to exult over her— Especially, when I could too justly attribute to the disposition of some of her wakeful hours no small part of that distress.

She raved extremely at this last hint: but reminded me of the gentle treatment of all my friends, my mother's in particular, before it came to this: she said, that I had discovered a spirit they never had expected; that, if they had *thought* me such a championess, they would hardly have ventured to engage with me; but that now, the short and the long was, that the matter had gone too far to be given up; that it was become a contention between *duty* and *wilfulness*; whether a parent's authority were to yield to a daughter's obstinacy, or the contrary: that I must therefore bend or break; that was all, child.

I told her, that I wished the subject were of such a nature, that I could return her pleasantry with equal lightness of heart: but that, if Mr. Solmes had such merit in every-body's eyes, in *hers* particularly, why might he not be a *brother* to me, rather than a *husband?*

'O child,' says she, 'methinks you 'are as pleasant to the full as I am: I 'begin to have some hopes of you now. 'But do you think I will rob my sister 'of her humble servant? Had he first 'addressed himself to me,' proceeded she, 'something might have been said: 'but to take my younger sister's re-'fusal! No, no, child; it is not come 'to that neither! Besides, that would 'be to leave the door open in your 'heart for you know who, child; and 'we would fain bar him out, if possi-'ble. In short,' [and then she changed both her tone, and her looks] 'had I 'been as forward as somebody, to 'throw myself into the arms of one of 'the greatest profligates in England, 'who had endeavoured to support his 'claim to me through the blood of my 'brother, then might all my family 'join together to save me from such a 'wretch, and to marry me as fast as 'they could, to some worthy man, who 'might *opportunely* offer himself. And 'now, Clary, all's out, and make the 'most of it.'

Did not this deserve a severe return? Do say it did, to justify my reply.— 'Alas! for my poor sister!' said I— 'The man was not always so great a 'profligate. How true is the observa-'tion, *That unrequited love turns to 'deepest hate!*'

I thought she would have beat me. But I proceeded—'I have heard often 'of my brother's danger, and my bro-'ther's murderer. When so little cere-'mony is made with me, why should I 'not speak out?—Did he not seek to 'kill the *other*, if he could have done 'it? Would my brother have given 'Lovelace *his* life, had it been in his 'power?—The *aggressor* should not 'complain.—And, as to *opportune* of-'fers, would to Heaven some one had

'offered

'offered *opportunely* to somebody! It is 'not my fault, Bella, the *opportune* 'gentleman don't come!'

Could *you*, my dear, have shewn more spirit? I expected to feel the weight of her hand. She did come up to me, with it held up: then, speechless with passion, ran down half way of the stairs, and came up again.

When she could speak—'God give 'me patience with you!'

'Amen,' said I: 'but you see, Bella, 'how ill you bear the retort you pro-'voke. Will you forgive me; and let 'me find a sister in *you*, as *I* am sorry, 'if you have reason to think me un-'sisterly in what I have said?'

Then did she pour upon me, with greater violence; considering my gentleness as a triumph of temper over her. She was resolved, she said, to let everybody know how I took the wicked Lovelace's part against my brother.

I wished, I told her, I could make the plea for *myself*, which she might for *herself*; to wit, That my anger was more inexcuseable than my judgment. But I presumed she had some other view in coming to me, than she had hitherto acquainted me with. 'Let me,' said I, 'but know (after all that has passed) 'if you have any-thing to propose that 'I *can* comply with; any-thing that 'can make my *only* sister once more my 'friend?'

I had before, upon her ridiculing me on my supposed character of *meekness*, said, that, although I wished to be thought *meek*, I would not be *abject*; although *humble*, not *mean*: and here, in a sneering way, she cautioned me on that head.

I replied, that her pleasantry was much more agreeable than her anger. But I wished she would let me know the end of a visit that had hitherto [*between* us] been so unsisterly.

She desired to be informed, in the name of *every-body*, was her word, what I was determined upon? And whether to comply or not?—One word for all: my friends were not to have patience with so perverse a creature for ever.

This then I told her I would do: absolutely break with the man they were all so determined against; upon condition, however, that neither Mr. Solmes, nor any other, were urged to me with the force of a command.

And what was this, more than I had offered before? What, but ringing my changes upon the same bells, and neither receding nor advancing one tittle?

If I knew what other proposals I could make, I told her, that would be acceptable to them all, and free me from the address of a man so disagreeable to me, I *would* make them. I had indeed before offered, never to marry without my father's consent.

She interrupted me, That was because I depended upon my whining tricks to bring my father and mother to what I pleased.

'A *poor* dependence!' I said.—*She* knew those who would make that dependence vain—

And I *should* have brought them to my own beck, very probably, and my uncle Harlowe too, as also my aunt Hervey, had I not been forbidden their sight, and thereby hindered from playing my pug's tricks before them.

'At least, Bella,' said I, 'you have 'hinted to me *to whom* I am obliged, 'that my father and mother, and every-'body else, treat me thus harshly. But 'surely you make them all very weak. 'Indifferent persons, judging of us two 'from what *you* say, would either think '*me* a very artful creature, or *you* a very 'spiteful one.'

'You are *indeed* a very artful one, 'for that matter,' interrupted she in a passion: 'one of the artfullest I ever 'knew!' And then followed an accusation so low! so unsisterly!—That I half-bewitched people by my insinuating address: that nobody could be valued or respected, but must stand like cyphers wherever I came. 'How often,' said she, 'have I and my brother been talk-'ing upon a subject, and had every-'body's attention, till *you* came in, 'with your bewitching *meek* pride, and '*humble* significance? And then have 'we either been stopped by references 'to Miss Clary's opinion, forsooth; or 'been forced to stop ourselves, or must 'have talked on unattended to by 'every-body.'

She paused: 'Dear Bella, proceed.'

She indeed seemed only gathering breath.

'And so I *will*,' said she—'Did you 'not bewitch my grandfather? Could 'any-thing be pleasing to him, that you 'did not say or do? How did he use to 'hang, till he slabbered again, poor

'doating

'doating old man! on your ſilver tongue! 'Yet what did *you* ſay, that *we* could 'not have ſaid? What did *you* do, that '*we* did not endeavour to do?—And 'what was all this for? Why, truly, 'his laſt will ſhewed what effect your '*ſmooth* obligingneſs had upon him!—'To leave the *acquired part* of his 'eſtate from the next heirs, his own 'ſons, to a grandchild; to his *youngeſt* 'grandchild! a *daughter* too!—To 'leave the family-pictures from his ſons 'to you, becauſe you could *tiddle* about 'them, and, though you now neglect 'their examples, could wipe and clean 'them with your dainty hands! The 'family-plate too, in ſuch quantities, 'of two or three generations ſtanding, 'muſt not be changed, becauſe his *pre-*'*cious child**, humouring his old *fal-*'*lal* taſte, admired it, to make it all her 'own.'

This was too low to move me: 'O 'my poor ſiſter!' ſaid I; 'not to be 'able, or at leaſt willing, to diſtinguiſh 'between art and nature! if I *did* oblige, 'I was happy in it: I looked for no 'further reward; my mind is above 'art, from the dirty motives you men-'tion. I wiſh with all my heart my 'grandfather had not thus diſtinguiſh-'ed me: he ſaw my brother likely to 'be amply provided for *out* of the fa-'mily, as well as *in* it; he deſired that '*you* might have the greater ſhare of my 'father's favour for it; and no doubt 'but you *both* will. You know, Bella, 'that the eſtate my grandfather be-'queathed *me* was not half the real 'eſtate he left.'

'What's all that to an eſtate in poſ-'ſeſſion, and left you with ſuch diſ-'tinctions, as gave you a reputation of 'greater value than the eſtate itſelf?'

'Hence my misfortune, Bella, in 'your envy, I doubt!—But have I not 'given up that poſſeſſion in the beſt 'manner I could?'

'Yes,' interrupting me, ſhe hated me for that *beſt manner*. Specious little witch! ſhe called me: 'Your *beſt man-*'*ner*, ſo full of art and deſign, had ne-'ver been ſeen through, if you, with 'your blandiſhing ways, had not been 'put out of ſight, and reduced to poſi-'tive declarations!—Hindered from 'playing your little whining tricks; 'curling, like a ſerpent, about your 'mamma; and making her cry to deny 'you any-thing your little obſtinate 'heart was ſet upon!'

'Obſtinate heart, Bella!'

'Yes, obſtinate heart! For did you 'ever give up any-thing? Had you not 'the art to make them think all was 'right you aſked, though my brother 'and I were frequently refuſed favours 'of no greater import?'

'I know not, Bella, that I ever aſked 'any-thing unfit to be granted. I ſel-'dom aſked favours for *myſelf*, but for '*others*.'

I was a reflecting creature for this.

'All you ſpeak of, Bella, was a long 'time ago. I cannot go ſo far back into 'our childiſh follies. Little did I think 'of how *long ſtanding* this your *late-*'*ſhewn* antipathy is.'

I was a reflecter again! Such a *ſaucy meekneſs*; ſuch a *beſt manner*; and ſuch venom in words!—'O Clary! Clary! 'Thou wert always a *two-faced* girl!'

'Nobody thought I had two faces, 'when I gave up all into my father's 'management; taking from his boun-'ty, as before, all my little pocket-'money, without a ſhilling addition to 'my ſtipend, or deſiring it.'

'Yes, cunning creature!—And that 'was another of your *fetches*!—For did 'it not engage my fond father (as no 'doubt you thought it would) to tell 'you, that, ſince you had done ſo grate-'ful and dutiful a thing, he would keep 'entire, for your uſe, all the produce 'of the eſtate left you, and be but your 'ſteward in it; and that you ſhould be 'entitled to the ſame allowances as be-'fore? Another of your *hook-in's*, Clary! '—So that all your extravagances have 'been ſupported gratis.'

'My extravagances, Bella!—But did 'my father ever give me any-thing he 'did not give you?'

'Yes, indeed; I got more by that 'means, than I ſhould have had the 'conſcience to aſk. But I have ſtill the 'greater part to ſhew! But *you!* What 'have *you* to ſhew!—I dare ſay, not fifty 'pieces in the world!'

'Indeed I have not!'

'I believe you!—Your mamma Nor-'ton, I ſuppoſe—But mum for that!'

'Unworthy Bella!—The good wo-'man, although low in circumſtance, is 'great in mind! Much greater than

* Alluding to his words in the preamble to the claſſes in his will, Page 19.

'thoſe

'those who would impute meanness to
'a soul incapable of it.'

'What then have you done with the
'sums given you from infancy to squan-
'der?—Let me ask you,' [affecting
archness] 'Has, has, has Lovelace, has
'your rake, put it out at interest for
'you?'

'O that my sister would not make
'me blush for her! It *is*, however, out
'at interest!—And I hope it will bring
'me interest upon interest!—Better than
'to lie useless in my cabinet.'

She understood me, she said. Were I a man, she should suppose I was aiming to carry the county—Popularity! A crowd to follow me with their blessings as I went to and from church, and nobody else to be regarded, were agreeable things. House-top proclamations! I *hid not my light under a bushel*, she would say that for me. But was it not a little hard upon me, to be kept from blazing on a Sunday?—And to be hindered from my charitable ostentations?

'This, indeed, Bella, is cruel in *you*,
'who have so largely contributed to my
'confinement.—But go on. You'll be
'out of breath by-and-by. I cannot
'wish to be *able* to return this usage.—
'*Poor* Bella!' And I believe I smiled a little too contemptuously for a sister to a sister.

'None of your saucy contempts,'
[rising in her voice:] 'none of your
'*poor Bella's*, with that air of superi-
'ority in a younger sister!'

'Well, then, *rich* Bella!' curtseying—
'that will please you better—And it
'is due likewise to the hoards you boast
'of.'

'Look-ye, Clary,' holding up her hand, 'if you are not a little more *ab-*
'*ject* in your *meekness*, a little more
'*mean* in your *humility*, and treat me
'with the respect due to an elder sister—
'you shall find—'

'Not that you will treat me worse
'than you *have done*, Bella!—That
'cannot be; unless you were to let fall
'your uplifted hand upon me—And
'that would less become you to *do*, than
'me to *bear*.'

'Good, meek creature—But you
'were upon your overtures just now!—
'I shall surprize every-body by tarry-
'ing so long. They will think some
'good may be done with you—And
'supper will be ready.'

A tear would stray down my cheek—

'How happy have I been,' said I, sigh-
ing, 'in the supper-time conversations,
'with all my dear friends in my eye
'round their hospitable board!'

I met only with insult for this—Bella has not a *feeling* heart. The highest joy in this life she is not capable of: but then she saves herself many griefs, by her impenetrableness—Yet, for ten times the pain that such a sensibility is attended with, would I not part with the pleasure it brings with it.

She asked me, upon my turning from her, If she should say any-thing *below* of my *compliances?*

'You may say, That I will do every-
'thing they would have me do, if they
'will free me from Mr. Solmes's ad-
'dress.'

'This is all you desire at present,
'*creeper on! insinuator!*' [What words she has!] 'But will not t'other man
'flame out, and roar most horribly, up-
'on the snatching from his paws a prey
'he thought himself sure of?'

'I must let you talk in your own
'way, or we shall never come to a point.
'I shall not matter his *roaring*, as you
'call it. I will promise him, that, if I
'ever marry any other man, it shall not
'be till *he* is married. And if he be
'not satisfied with such a condescen-
'sion, I shall think he *ought:* and I will
'give any assurances, that I will neither
'correspond with him, nor see him.
'Surely this will do.'

'But I suppose then you will have
'no objection to see and converse, on a
'civil foot, with Mr. Solmes—as your
'father's friend, or so?'

'No! I must be permitted to retire to
'my apartment whenever he comes. I
'would no more converse with the
'one, than correspond with the other.
'That would be to make Mr. Lovelace
'guilty of some rashness, on a belief,
'that I broke with him, to have Mr.
'Solmes.'

'And so, that wicked wretch is to
'be allowed such a controul over you,
'that you are not to be civil to your
'father's friends, at his own house, for
'fear of incensing *him!*—When this
'comes to be represented, be so good
'as to tell me, what is it you expect
'from it?'

Every-thing, I said, or *nothing*, as she was pleased to represent it.—'Be so
'good as to give it your interest, Bella,
'and say, further, That I will by any

'means I can, in the law or otherwise, 'make over to my father, to my uncles, 'or even to my brother, all I am en- 'titled to by my grandfather's will, as 'a security for the performance of my 'promises. And as I shall have no rea- 'son to expect any favour from my fa- 'ther, if I break them, I shall not be 'worth any-body's having. And fur- 'ther still, unkindly as my brother has 'used me, I will go down to Scotland 'privately, as his housekeeper, [I now 'see I may be spared here] if he will 'promise to treat me no worse than he 'would do an hired one.—Or I will go 'to Florence, to my cousin Morden, if 'his stay in Italy will admit of it. In '*either case*, it may be given out, that 'I am gone to the *other*; or to the 'world's end. I care not whither it is 'said I am gone, or do go.'

'Let me ask you, child, if you will 'give your pretty proposal in writing?'

'Yes, with all my heart.' And I stepped to my closet, and wrote to the purpose I have mentioned; and, moreover, the following lines to my brother.

'MY DEAR BROTHER,

'I Hope I have made such proposals 'to my sister, as will be accepted. 'I am sure they will, if you please to 'give them your sanction. Let me beg 'of you for God's sake, that you will. 'I think myself very unhappy in hav- 'ing incurred your displeasure. No 'sister can love a brother better than I 'love you. Pray do not put the worst, 'but the best constructions upon my 'proposals, when you have them re- 'ported to you. Indeed I mean the 'best. I have no subterfuges, no arts, 'no intentions, but to keep to the let- 'ter of them. You shall yourself draw 'up every-thing into writing, as strong 'as you can; and I will sign it; and 'what the *law* will not do to enforce 'it, my *resolution* and my *will* shall: 'so that I shall be worth nobody's ad- 'dress, that has not my papa's con- 'sent; nor shall any person, nor any 'consideration, induce me to revoke it. 'You can do more than any-body 'to reconcile my parents and uncles 'to me. Let me owe this desirable fa- 'vour to your brotherly interposition, 'and you will for ever oblige *your af- 'flicted sister*,

'CL. HARLOWE.'

And how do you think Bella employed herself while I was writing?—Why, playing gently upon my harpsichord: and *humming* to it, to shew her unconcernedness.

When I approached her with what I had written, she arose with an air of levity—'Why, love, you have not writ- 'ten already!—You have, I protest!— 'O what a ready penwoman!—And 'may I read it?'

'If you please. And let me beseech 'you, my dear Bella, to back these pro- 'posals with your good offices: and,' [folding my uplifted hands; tears, I believe, standing in my eyes] 'I will love 'you as never sister loved another.'

'Thou art a strange creature,' said she; 'there is no withstanding 'thee.'

She took the proposals and letter; and having read them, burst into an affected laugh: 'How wise-ones may be 'taken in!—Then you did not know, 'that I was jesting with you all this 'time!—And so you would have me 'carry down this pretty piece of non- 'sense?'

'Don't let me be surprized at your 'seeming unsisterliness, Bella. I hope 'it is *but* seeming. There can be *no* wit 'in such a jesting as this.'

'The folly of the creature!—How 'natural is it for people, when they 'set their hearts upon any-thing, to 'think every-body must see with their 'eyes!—Pray, dear child, what be- 'comes of your father's authority *here?* '—Who *stoops here*, the *parent*, or the *child?*—How does *this* square with 'the engagements actually agreed up- 'on between your father and Mr. 'Solmes? What security, that your 'rake will not follow you to the *world's* 'end?—Nevertheless, that you may 'not think that I stand in the way of a 'reconciliation on such fine terms as 'these, I will be your messenger this 'once, and hear what my papa will say 'to it; although beforehand I can tell 'you, these proposals will not answer 'the principal end.'

So down she went. But, it seems, my aunt Hervey and my uncle Harlowe were not gone away: and as they have all engaged to act in concert, messengers were dispatched to my uncle and aunt to desire them to be there to breakfast in the morning.

MONDAY

MONDAY NIGHT, 11 O'CLOCK.

I AM afraid I shall not be thought worthy—

Just as I began not to fear I should be thought worthy of an answer, Betty rapped at my door, and said, If I were not in bed, she had a letter for me. I had but just done writing the above dialogue, and stepped to the door, with the pen in my hand—'Always writing, 'Miss!' said the bold wench: 'it is 'admirable how you can get away what 'you write—But the fairies, they say, 'are always at hand to help lovers.'—She retired in so much haste, that had I been disposed, I could not take the notice of this insolence which it deserved.

I inclose my brother's letter. He was resolved to let me see, that I should have nothing to expect from his kindness. But surely he will not be permitted to carry every point. The assembling of my friends to-morrow is a good sign: and I will hope something from that, and from proposals so reasonable. And now I will try if any repose will fall to my lot for the remainder of this night.

'TO MISS CLARY HARLOWE.'

[INCLOSED IN THE PRECEDING.]

'YOUR proposals will be consi-'dered by your father and mo-'ther, and all your friends, to-mor-'row morning. What trouble does 'your shameful forwardness give us 'all! I wonder you have the courage to 'write to me, upon whom you are so 'continually emptying your *whole fe-'male quiver*. I have no patience 'with you, for reflecting upon me as 'the aggressor in a quarrel which owed 'it's beginning to my consideration 'for *you*.

'You have made such confessions in 'a villain's favour, as ought to cause 'all your relations to renounce you 'for ever. For my part, I will not 'believe any woman in the world, who 'promises against her *avowed* inclina-'tion. To put it out of your *power* 'to ruin yourself is the only way left 'to prevent your ruin. I did not in-'tend to write; but your *too-kind* sister 'has prevailed upon me. As to your 'going into Scotland, that day of 'grace is over.—Nor would I advise, 'that you should go to *grandfather-up* 'your cousin Morden. Besides, that 'worthy gentleman might be involved 'in some fatal dispute, upon your ac-'count; and then be called the *ag-'gressor*.

'A fine situation you have brought 'yourself to, to propose to hide your-'self from your rake, and to have 'falsehoods told, to conceal you!—'Your confinement, at this rate, is 'the happiest thing that could befal 'you. Your bravo's behaviour at 'church, looking out for you, is a 'sufficient indication of his power over 'you, had you *not* so shamelessly ac-'knowledged it.

'One word for all—Your parents 'and uncles may do as they will: but 'if, for the honour of the family, I 'cannot carry this point, I will retire 'to Scotland, and never see the face of 'any one of it more.

'JA. HARLOWE.'

There's a brother!—There's flaming duty to a father, and mother, and uncles!—But he sees himself valued, and made of consequence; and he gives himself airs accordingly!—Nevertheless, as I said above, I will hope better things from those who have not the interest my brother has to keep open these unhappy differences.

LETTER XLIII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

TUESDAY, MARCH 21.

WOULD you not have thought, my dear Miss Howe, as well as I, that my proposal must have been accepted: and that my brother, by the last article of his unbrotherly letter, (where he threatens to go to Scotland if it should be hearkened to) was of opinion that it *would*?

For my part, after I had read the unkind letter over and over, I concluded, upon the whole, that a reconciliation upon terms so disadvantageous to myself, as hardly any other person in my case, I dare say, would have proposed, must be the result of this morning's conference. And in that belief I had begun to give myself new trouble in

thinking (this difficulty over) how I should be able to pacify Lovelace on that part of my engagement, by which I undertook to break off all correſpondence with him, unleſs my friends ſhould be brought by the interpoſition of his powerful friends, and any offers they might make, (which it was rather *his* part to ſuggeſt, than *mine* to intimate) to change their minds.

Thus was I employed, not very agreeably, you may believe, becauſe of the vehemence of the tempers I had to conflict with; when breakfaſting-time approached, and my judges began to arrive.

And oh! how my heart fluttered on hearing the chariot of the one, and then of the other, rattle through the court-yard, and the hollow-ſounding footſtep giving notice of each perſon's ſtepping out, to take his place on the awful bench which my fancy had formed for them and my other judges!

'That,' thought I, 'is my aunt Hervey's! That my uncle Harlowe's! Now comes my uncle Antony!' And my imagination made a fourth chariot for the odious Solmes, although it happened that he was not there.

'And now,' thought I, 'are they all aſſembled: and now my brother calls upon my ſiſter to make *her* report! Now the hard-hearted Bella interlards her ſpeech with invectives! Now has ſhe concluded her report! Now they debate upon it!—Now does my brother flame! Now threaten to go to Scotland! Now is he chidden, and now ſoothed!'

And then I ran through the whole conference in my imagination, forming ſpeeches for this perſon and that, *pro* and *con.* till all concluded, as I flattered myſelf, in an acceptance of my conditions, and in giving directions to have an inſtrument drawn to tie me up to my good behaviour: while I ſuppoſed all agreed to give Solmes a wife every way more worthy of him, and with *her* the promiſe of my grandfather's eſtate, in caſe of my forfeiture, or dying unmarried, on the righteous condition he propoſes to entitle himſelf to it with me.

'And now,' thought I, 'am I to be ordered down to recognize my own propoſals. And how ſhall I look upon my awful judges? How ſhall I ſtand the queſtions of ſome, the ſet ſurlineſs of others, the returning love of one or two? How greatly ſhall I be affected!'

Then I wept. Then I dried my eyes: then I practiſed at my glaſs for a look more chearful than my heart.

'And now' [as any-thing ſtirred] 'is my ſiſter coming to declare the iſſue of all!' Tears guſhing again, my heart fluttering as a bird againſt it's wires; drying my eyes again and again to no purpoſe.

And thus, my Nancy, [Excuſe the fanciful prolixity] was I employed, and ſuch were my thoughts and imaginations, when I found a very different reſult from the hopeful conference.

For about ten o'clock up came my ſiſter, with an air of cruel triumph, waving her hand with a light flouriſh.

'Obedience without reſerve is required of you, Clary. My papa is juſtly incenſed, that you ſhould *preſume* to diſpute his will, and to make conditions with him. He knows what is beſt for you: and as you own matters are gone a great way between this hated Lovelace and you, they will believe nothing you ſay; except you will give the one *only* inſtance, that will put them out of doubt of the ſincerity of your promiſes.

'What, child, are you ſurprized?—Cannot you ſpeak?—Then, it ſeems, you had expected a different iſſue, had you?—Strange that you could!—With all your acknowledgments and confeſſions, ſo creditable to your *noted prudence!*'

I was indeed ſpeechleſs for ſome time: my eyes were even fixed, and ceaſed to flow. But upon the hard-hearted Bella's proceeding with her airs of inſult, 'Indeed I *was* miſtaken,' ſaid I; 'indeed I was!—For in you, Bella, I expected, I hoped for, a ſiſter.'

'What!' interrupted ſhe, 'with all your mannerly flings, and your deſpiſing airs, did you expect, that I was capable of telling ſtories for you?—Did you think, that when I was aſked my own opinion of the ſincerity of your declarations, I could not tell them, *how far matters had gone between you and your fellow?*—When the intention is to bend that ſtubborn will of yours to your duty, do you think I would deceive them?

'—Do

'—Do you think I would encourage 'them to call you down, to contradict 'all that I should have *invented* in 'your favour?'

'Well, well, Bella; I am the less 'obliged to you; that's all. I was 'willing to think, that I had still a 'brother and sister. But I find I am 'mistaken.'

'*Pretty mopsa-eyed soul!*'—was her expression—'And was it willing to 'think it had still a *brother* and *sister?* 'And why don't you go on, Clary?' [mocking my half-weeping accent] 'I 'thought too I had a *father*, and *mo-* 'ther, *two uncles*, and an *aunt: but I* 'am miss—taken, that's all—Come, 'Clary, say this, and it will in part be 'true, because you have thrown off 'their authority, and because you re- 'spect one vile wretch more than them 'all.'

'How have I deserved this at your 'hands, sister?—But I will only say, I 'pity you.'

'And with that disdainful air too, 'Clary!—None of that bridled neck! 'None of your scornful pity, girl!—I 'beseech you!'

'This sort of behaviour is natural 'to you, surely, Bella!—What *new* 'talents does it discover in you!—But 'proceed—If it be a pleasure to you, 'proceed, Bella. And since I must 'not pity *you*, I will pity *myself*: for 'nobody else will.'

'Because you don't—' said she.

'Hush, Bella,' interrupting her; '*Because I don't deserve it*—I know 'you were going to say so. I will 'say as you say in every-thing; and 'that's the way to please you.'

'Then say, Lovelace is a villain.'

'So I will, when I think him so.'

'Then you don't think him so?'

'Indeed I don't. *You* did not al- 'ways, Bella.'

'And what, Clary, mean you by 'that?' [bristling up to me]—Tell me 'what you mean by that reflection?'

'Tell me, why you call it a reflec- 'tion?—What did I say?'

'Thou art a provoking creature— 'But what say you to two or three 'duels of that wretch's?'

'I can't tell what to say, unless I 'knew the occasions.'

'Do you justify duelling at all?'

'I do not; neither can I help his 'duelling.'

'Will you go down, and humble 'that stubborn spirit of yours to your 'mamma?'

I said nothing.

'Shall I conduct your ladyship 'down?' [offering to take my declined hand.]

'What! not vouchsafe to answer me?' I turned from her in silence.

'What! turn your back upon me 'too!—Shall I bring up your mamma 'to you, love?' [following me, and taking my struggling hand] 'What! 'not speak yet! Come, my sullen, 'silent dear, speak one word to me— 'You must say *two* very soon to Mr. 'Solmes, I can tell you that.'

'Then' [gushing out into tears, which I could not hold in longer] 'they 'shall be the last words I will ever 'speak.'

'Well, well,' [insultingly wiping my averted face with her handkerchief, while her other hand held mine in a ri- diculing tone] 'I am glad any-thing 'will make thee speak: then you think 'you may be brought to speak the *two* 'words—Only they are to be the last! '—How like a gentle *lovyer* from it's 'tender bleeding heart was that!'

'Ridiculous Bella!'

'Saucy Clary!' [changing her sneer- ing tone to an imperious one] 'But 'do you think you can humble your- 'self to go down to your mamma?'

'I am tired with such stuff as this. 'Tell me, Bella, if my mamma will 'condescend to see me?'

'Yes, if you can be dutiful at last.'

'I can. I will.'

'But what call you dutiful?'

'To give up my own *inclinations*— 'That's something more for you to 'tell of—in obedience to my parents 'commands; and to beg I may not be 'made miserable with a man that is fit- ter for *any-body* than for me.'

'For *me*, do you mean, Clary?'

'Why not? since you have put the 'question. You have a better opinion 'of him than I have. My friends, I 'hope, would not think him too good 'for *me*, and not good *enough* for *you*. 'But cannot you tell me, Bella, what 'is to become of me, without insult- 'ing over me thus?—If I must be thus 'treated, remember, that if I am 'guilty of any rashness, the usage I 'meet with will justify it.'

'So, Clary, you are contriving an 'excuse,

'*excuſe*, I find, for ſomewhat that we 'have not doubted has been in your 'head a great while.'

'If it were ſo, you ſeem reſolved, 'for your part, and ſo does my bro- 'ther for *his*, that I ſhall not want 'one.—But indeed, Bella, I can bear 'no longer this repetition of the worſt 'part of yeſterday's converſation: I 'deſire I may throw myſelf at my fa- 'ther's and mother's feet, and hear 'from them what their ſentence is: I 'ſhall at leaſt avoid, by that means, 'the unfiſterly inſults I meet with from 'you.'

'Hey-day! What, is this you? Is 'it you, my meek ſiſter Clary?'

'Yes, it is I, Bella; and I will 'claim the protection due to a child of 'the family, or to know why I am to 'be thus treated, when I offer only to 'preſerve to myſelf the liberty of *re- 'fuſal*, which belongs to my ſex, and, 'to pleaſe my parents, would give up 'my *choice*. I have contented myſelf 'till now to take *ſecond-hand* meſſen- 'gers, and *firſt-hand* inſults: you are 'but my ſiſter; my brother is not my 'ſovereign. And while I have a fa- 'ther and mother living, I will not 'be thus treated by a brother and ſiſ- 'ter, and their ſervants, all ſetting 'upon me, as it ſhould ſeem, to make 'me deſperate, and to do a raſh thing. '—I will know, in ſhort, ſiſter Bella, '*why* I am to be conſtrained thus?— 'What is intended by it?—And whe- 'ther I am to be conſidered as a *child* 'or a *ſlave?*'

She ſtood aghaſt all this time, partly with real, partly with affected ſurprize.

'And is it *you?* Is it *indeed* you?— 'Well, Clary, you amaze me! But 'ſince you are ſo deſirous to refer 'yourſelf to your father and mother, 'I will go down, and tell them what 'you ſay. Your friends are not yet 'gone, I believe: they ſhall aſſemble 'again; and then you may come down, 'and plead your own cauſe in perſon.'

'Let me then. But let my *brother* 'and *you* be abſent. You have made 'yourſelves too much *parties* againſt 'me, to ſit as my judges. And I de- 'ſire to have none of yours or his in- 'terpoſitions. I am ſure you could 'not have repreſented what I propoſed 'fairly: I am *ſure* you could not. Nor 'is it poſſible you ſhould be *commiſ- 'ſioned* to treat me thus.'

'Well, well, I'll call up my brother 'to you.—I will indeed.—He ſhall 'juſtify himſelf, as well as me.'

'I deſire not to ſee my brother, ex- 'cept he will come *as* a brother, laying 'aſide the authority he has unjuſtly aſ- 'ſumed over me.'

'And ſo, Clary, it is nothing to 'him, or to me, is it, that our ſiſter 'ſhall diſgrace her whole family?'

'As how, Bella, diſgrace it?—The 'man whom you thus freely treat, is 'a man of birth and fortune: he is a 'man of parts, and nobly allied.— 'He was once thought worthy of you; 'and I wiſh to Heaven you had had 'him. I am ſure it was not my fault 'you had not, although you treat me 'thus!'

This ſet her into a flame: I wiſh I had forborn it. O how the poor Bella raved! I thought ſhe would have beat me once or twice: and ſhe vowed, her fingers itched to do ſo—But I was not worth her *anger*. Yet ſhe flamed on.

We were heard to be high.—And Betty came up from my mother to command my ſiſter to attend her.—She went down accordingly, threatening me with letting every-one know what a violent creature I had ſhewn myſelf to be.

TUESDAY NOON, MARCH 21.

I HAVE as yet heard no more of my ſiſter: and have not courage enough to inſiſt upon throwing myſelf at the feet of my father and mother, as I thought in my heat of temper I ſhould be able to do. And I am now grown as calm as ever; and were Bella to come up again, as fit to be played upon as before.

I am indeed ſorry that I ſent her from me in ſuch diſorder. But my papa's letter threatening me with my uncle Antony's houſe and chapel, terrifies me ſtrangely; and by their ſilence I am afraid ſome new ſtorm is gathering.

But what ſhall I do with this Lovelace? I have juſt now, by the unſuſpected hole in the wall, (*that I told you of in my letter by Hannah*) got a letter from him—So uneaſy is he for fear I ſhould be prevailed upon in Solmes's favour; ſo full of menaces, if I am; ſo reſenting the uſage I receive; [for, how I cannot tell; but he has undoubtedly intelligence of all that is done in the family] ſuch proteſtations of inviolable faith and honour; ſuch vows

of

of reformation; such pressing arguments to escape from this disgraceful confinement—O my Nancy, what shall I do with this Lovelace?

LETTER XLIV.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, 9 O'CLOCK.

MY aunt Hervey lay here last night, and is but just gone from me. She came up to me with my sister. They would not trust my aunt without this ill-natured witness. When she entered my chamber, I told her, That this visit was a high favour to a poor prisoner, in her hard confinement. I kissed her hand. She, kindly saluting me, said, 'Why this distance to your 'aunt, my dear, who loves you so 'well?'

She owned, That she came to expostulate with me, for the peace-sake of the family: for that she could not believe it possible, if I did not conceive myself unkindly treated, that I, who had ever shewn such a sweetness of temper, as well as manners, should be thus resolute, in a point so *very near* to my father, and all my friends. My mother and she were both willing to impute my resolution to the manner I had been begun with; and to my supposing that my brother had originally more of a hand in the proposals made by Mr. Solmes, than my father or other friends. In short, fain would my aunt have furnished me with an excuse to come off my opposition; Bella all the while humming a tune, and opening this book and that, without meaning; but saying nothing.

After having shewed me, that my opposition could not be of signification, my father's honour being engaged, my aunt concluded with enforcing upon me my duty, in stronger terms than I believe she would have done, (the circumstances of the case considered) had not my sister been present.

It would but be repeating what I have so often mentioned, to give you the arguments that passed on both sides. —So I will only recite what she was pleased to say, that carried with it a new face.

When she found me inflexible, as she was pleased to call it, she said, For her part, she could not but say, that if I were not to have either Mr. Solmes or Mr. Lovelace, and yet, to make my friends easy, *must* marry, she should not think amiss of Mr. Wyerley. What did I think of Mr. Wyerley?

'Aye, Clary,' put in my sister, 'what 'say you to Mr. Wyerley?'

I saw through this immediately. It was said on purpose, I doubted not, to have an argument against me of absolute prepossession in Mr. Lovelace's favour: since Mr. Wyerley every-where avows his value, even to veneration, for me; and is far less exceptionable, both in person and mind, than Mr. Solmes: and I was willing to turn the tables, by trying how far Mr. Solmes's terms might be dispensed with; since the same terms could not be expected from Mr. Wyerley.

I therefore desired to know, whether my answer, if it should be in favour of Mr. Wyerley, would release me from Mr. Solmes?—For I owned, that I had not the aversion to *him*, that I had to the *other*.

Nay, she had no commission to propose such a thing. She only knew, that my father and mother would not be easy till Mr. Lovelace's hopes were entirely defeated.

'Cunning creature!' said my sister.

And this, and her joining in the question before, convinced me, that it was a designed snare for me.

'Don't YOU, dear Madam,' said I, 'put questions that can answer no end, 'but to support my brother's schemes 'against me.—But are there any hopes 'of an end to my sufferings and disgrace, without having this hated man 'imposed upon me? Will not what I 'have offered be accepted? I am sure 'it *ought*—I will venture to say that.'

'Why, niece, if there be *not* any 'such hopes, I presume you don't think 'yourself absolved from the duty due 'from a child to her parents?'

'Yes,' said my sister, 'I do not 'doubt but it is Miss Clary's aim, if 'she does not fly to her Lovelace, to 'get her estate into her own hands, 'and go to live at *The Grove*, in that 'independence upon which she builds 'all her perverseness. And, dear heart! 'my little love, how will you then 'blaze away! Your mamma Norton, 'your oracle, with your poor at your 'gates, mingling so *proudly* and so '*meanly* with the ragged herd! Reflect-

'ing,

'ing, by your oſtentation, upon all 'the ladies in the county, who do not 'as you do. This is known to be your 'ſcheme! And the poor *without*-doors, 'and Lovelace *within*, with one hand 'building up a name, pulling it down 'with the other!—O what a charming 'ſcheme is this!—But let me tell you, 'my pretty little flighty one, that your 'father's *living* will ſhall controul 'your grandfather's *dead* one; and 'that eſtate will be diſpoſed of as your 'fond grandfather would have diſpoſed 'of it, had he lived to ſee ſuch a change 'in his favourite. In a word, Miſs, it 'will be kept out of your hands, till my 'father ſees you diſcreet enough to have 'the management of it, or till you can '*dutifully*, by law, tear it from him.'

'Fie, Miſs Harlowe!' ſaid my aunt: 'this is not pretty to your ſiſter.'

'O Madam, let her go on. This 'is nothing to what I have borne from 'Miſs Harlowe. She is either com-'miſſioned to treat me ill by her *envy*, 'or by an *higher* authority, to which 'I muſt ſubmit.—As to revoking the 'eſtate, what hinders, if I pleaſed? 'I know my power; but have not the 'leaſt thought of exerting it. Be 'pleaſed to let my father know, that, 'whatever be the conſequence to my-'ſelf, were he to turn me out of doors, '(which I ſhould rather he would do, 'than to be confined and inſulted as I 'am) and were I to be reduced to indi-'gence and want, I would ſeek no re-'lief that ſhould be contrary to his 'will.'

'For that matter, child,' ſaid my aunt, 'were you to marry, you muſt 'do as your *huſband* will have you. 'If that huſband be Mr. Lovelace, he 'will be glad of any opportunity of 'farther embroiling the families. And, 'let me tell you, niece, if he had the 'reſpect for you which he pretends to 'have, he would not throw out de-'fiances as he does. He is known to 'be a very revengeful man; and were 'I *you*, Miſs Clary, I ſhould be afraid 'he would wreak upon me that ven-'geance, though I had not offended 'him, which he is continually threat-'ening to pour upon the family.'

'Mr. Lovelace's threatened ven-'geance is in *return* for threatened ven-'geance. It is not every-body will 'bear inſult, as, of late, I have been 'forced to bear it.'

O how my ſiſter's face ſhone with paſſion!

'But Mr. Lovelace,' proceeded I, 'as I have ſaid twenty and twenty 'times, would be quite out of the queſ-'tion with me, were I to be generouſly 'treated!'

My ſiſter ſaid ſomething with great vehemence: but only raiſing my voice, to be heard, without minding her, 'Pray, Madam,' (provokingly inter-rogated I) 'was he not known to have 'been as wild a man, when he was *at 'firſt* introduced into our family, as 'he *now* is ſaid to be? Yet *then*, the 'common phraſes of *wild oats*, and '*black oxen*, and ſuch-like, were qua-'lifiers; and marriage, and the wife's 'diſcretion, were to perform wonders '—But,' (turning to my ſiſter) 'I 'find I have ſaid too much.'

'O thou wicked reflecter!—And 'what made *me* abhor him, think you, 'but the proof of thoſe villainous free-'doms that ought to have had the ſame 'effect upon you, were you but half 'ſo good a creature as you pretend to 'be?'

'*Proof*, did you ſay, Bella! I thought 'that you had not *proof?*—But *you 'know beſt*.'

Was not this very ſpiteful, my dear?

'Now, Clary,' ſaid ſhe, 'would I 'give a thouſand pounds to know all 'that is in thy little rancorous and re-'flecting heart, at this moment.'

'I might let you know for a much 'leſs ſum, and not be afraid of being 'worſe treated than I have been.'

'Well, young ladies, I am ſorry to 'ſee paſſion run ſo high between you. '—You know, niece,' (to me) 'you 'had not been confined thus to your 'apartment, could your mother by con-'deſcenſion, or your father by autho-'rity, have been able to move you. 'But how can you expect, when there 'muſt be a conceſſion on *one* ſide, that 'it ſhould be on theirs? If *my* Dolly, 'who has not the hundredth part of 'of your underſtanding, were thus to 'ſet herſelf up in abſolute contra-'diction to my will, in a point *ſo* ma-'terial, I ſhould not take it well of her '—Indeed I ſhould not.'

'I believe not, Madam: and if Miſs 'Hervey had juſt ſuch a brother, and 'juſt ſuch a ſiſter, [you *may* look, 'Bella!] and if both were to aggra-'vate her parents, as my brother and

'ſiſter

'sister do mine—Then, perhaps, you 'might use her as I am used: and if 'she hated the man you proposed to 'her, and with as much reason as I do 'Mr. Solmes—'

'And loved a rake and libertine, 'Miss, as you do Lovelace,' said my sister.

'Then might she' [continued I, not minding her] 'beg to be excused 'from obeying. But yet if she did, and 'would give you the most solemn as-'surances, and security besides, that 'she never would have the man you 'disliked, against your consent—I dare 'say, Miss Hervey's father and mo-'ther would sit down satisfied, and 'not endeavour to force her inclina-'tions.'

'So!'—[said my sister, with uplifted hands] '*father* and *mother* now come 'in for their share!'

'But if, child,' replied my aunt, 'I knew she *loved a rake*, and suspect-'ed that she sought only to gain time, 'in order to wire-draw me into a con-'sent—'

'I beg pardon, Madam, for inter-'rupting you; but if Miss Hervey 'could obtain *your* consent, what far-'ther would be to be said?'

'True, child; but she never should.'

'Then, Madam, it never would be.'

'That I doubt, niece.'

'If you do, Madam, can you think 'confinement and ill-usage is the way 'to prevent the apprehended rashness?'

'My dear, this sort of intimation 'would make one but too apprehensive, 'that there is no trusting to yourself, 'when one knows your inclination.'

'That apprehension, Madam, seems 'to have been conceived before this in-'timation, or the least cause for it, was 'given. Why else the disgraceful con-'finement I have been laid under?—'Let me venture to say, that my suffer-'ings seem to be rather owing to a 'concerted design to intimidate me,' [*Bella held up her hands*] '(knowing 'there were too good grounds for my 'opposition) than to doubt of my con-'duct; for when they were inflicted 'first, I had given no *cause* of doubt: 'nor should there now be room for 'any, if my discretion might be trusted 'to.'

My aunt, after a little hesitation, said, 'But, consider, my dear, what con-'fusion will be perpetuated in your fa-'mily, if you marry this hated Love-'lace?'

'And let it be considered, what mi-'sery to me, Madam, if I marry that 'hated Solmes?'

'Many a young creature has thought 'she could not love a man, with whom 'she has afterwards been very happy. 'Few women, child, marry their first 'loves.'

'That may be the reason there are 'so few happy marriages.'

'But there are few first impressions '*fit* to be encouraged.'

'I am afraid so too, Madam. I have 'a very indifferent opinion of light and 'first impressions. But, as I have 'often said, all I wish for, is, to have 'leave to live *single*.'

'Indeed you must not, Miss. Your 'father and mother will be unhappy 'till they see you married, and out of 'Lovelace's reach.—I am told that 'you propose to condition with him '(so far are matters gone between you) 'never to have *any* man, if you have 'not *him*.'

'I know no better way to prevent 'mischief on all sides, I freely own it '—And there is not, if *he* be out of 'the question, another man in the 'world, I can think favourably of.—'Nevertheless, I would give all I have 'in the world, that he were married to 'some other person—Indeed I would, 'Bella, for all you put on that smile 'of incredulity.'

'May be so, Clary: but I will smile 'for all that.'

'If *he* be out of the question!' repeated my aunt—'So, Miss Clary, I 'see how it is—I will go down—[Miss 'Harlowe, shall I follow you?]—And 'I will endeavour to persuade your fa-'ther to let my sister herself come up: 'and a happier event may then result.'

'Depend upon it, Madam,' said my sister, 'this will be the case: my mo-'ther and she will be both in tears; 'but with this different effect; my mo-'ther will come down softened, and 'cut to the heart; but will leave her 'favourite hardened, from the advan-'tages she will think she has over my 'mother's tenderness—Why, Madam, 'it is for this very reason the girl is 'not admitted into her presence.'

Thus she ran on, as she went down stairs.

T LETTER

LETTER XLV.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

MY heart fluttered with the hope and the fear of seeing my mother, and with the shame and the grief of having given her so much uneasiness. But it needed not: she was not permitted to come. But my aunt was so good as to return; yet not without my sister: and, taking my hand, made me sit down by her.

She came, she must own, *officiously*, she said, this *once* more; though against the opinion of my father: but knowing and dreading the consequence of my opposition, she could not *but* come.

She then set forth to me my friends expectations from me; Mr. Solmes's riches; (three times as rich he came out to be, as any-body had thought him) the settlements proposed; Mr. Lovelace's bad character; their aversion to him; all in a very strong light; but not in a stronger than my mother had before placed them in. My mother, surely, could not have given the particulars of what had passed between herself and me: if she had, my aunt would not have repeated many of the same sentiments, as you will find she did, that had been still more strongly urged, without effect by her venerable sister.

She said it would break the heart of my father to have it imagined, that he had not a power over his child; and that, as *he* thought, for my own good: a child too, whom they had always doated upon!—'Dearest, dearest Miss,' concluded she, clasping her fingers, with the most condescending earnestness, 'let me beg of you, for *my* sake, 'for *your own* sake, for a *hundred* 'sakes, to get over this averseness, to 'give up your prejudices, and make 'every-one happy and easy once more. '—I would kneel to you, my dearest 'niece—Nay, I *will* kneel to you!'

And down she dropt, and I with her, kneeling to her, and beseeching her not to kneel; clasping my arms about her, and bathing her worthy bosom with my tears.

'O rise! rise! my beloved aunt,' said I: 'you cut me to the heart with 'this condescending goodness.'

'Say then, my dearest niece, say 'then, that you will oblige all your 'friends!—If you love us, I *beseech* 'you do—'

'How can I promise what I can 'sooner chuse to die than to perform!'

'Say then, my dear, you will *con-* 'sider of it. Say you will but *reason* 'with yourself. Give us but hopes. 'Don't let me entreat, and *thus* en- 'treat, in vain.' For still she kneeled, and I by her.

'What a hard case is mine!—Could 'I but *doubt*, I know I could *conquer*. '—That which is an inducement to 'my friends, is none at all to me— 'How often, my dearest aunt, must I 'repeat the same thing?—Let me but 'be single—Cannot I live single? Let 'me be sent, as I have proposed, to Scot- 'land, to Florence; any-whither: let 'me be sent a slave to the Indies; any- 'whither—Any of these, I will con- 'sent to. But I cannot, *cannot* think 'of giving my vows to a man I can- 'not endure!'

'Well then,' rising, (Bella silently, with uplifted hands, reproaching my supposed perverseness) 'I see nothing 'can prevail with you to oblige us.'

'What *can* I do, my dearest aunt 'Hervey? What *can* I do? Were I 'capable of giving a hope I meant not 'to enlarge, then could I say, I would 'consider of your kind advice. But 'I would rather be thought *perverse* 'than *insincere*. Is there, however, 'no *medium?* Can *nothing* be thought 'of? Will nothing do, but to have a 'man who is the *more* disgustful to me, 'because he is unjust in the very ar- 'ticles he offers?'

'Whom now, Clary,' said my sister, 'do you reflect upon? Consider that.'

'Make not invidious applications of 'what I say, Bella. It may not be 'looked upon in the same light by every- 'one. The *giver* and the *accepter* are 'principally answerable in an unjust 'donation. While I think of it in 'this light, I should be inexcusable to 'be the latter. But why do I enter 'upon a *supposition* of this nature?— 'My heart, as I have often, *often* said, 'recoils at the *thoughts* of the man, 'in every light.—Whose father, but 'mine, agrees upon articles where 'there is no prospect of a liking? 'Where the direct contrary is avowed, 'all along avowed, without the least 'variation, or *shadow* of a change of 'sentiment?

'sentiment?—But it is not my father's 'doing originally. O my cruel, cruel 'brother, to cauſe a meaſure to be 'forced upon me, which he would not 'behave tolerably under, were the like 'to be offered to him!'

'The girl has got into her altitudes, 'aunt Hervey,' ſaid my ſiſter. 'You 'ſee, Madam, ſhe ſpares nobody. Be 'pleaſed to let her know what ſhe has 'to truſt to. Nothing is to be done 'with her. Pray, Madam, pronounce 'her doom.'

My aunt retired to the window, weeping, with my ſiſter in her hand: 'I cannot, indeed I cannot, Miſs Har-'lowe,' ſaid ſhe, ſoftly: (but yet I heard every word ſhe ſaid) 'there is 'great hardſhip in her caſe. She is a 'noble child after all. What pity 'things are gone ſo far!—But Mr. 'Solmes ought to be told to deſiſt.'

'O Madam,' ſaid my ſiſter, in a kind of loud whiſper, 'are *you* caught too 'by the little ſiren?—My mother did 'well not to come up!—I queſtion 'whether my father himſelf, after his 'firſt indignation, would not be turned 'round by her. Nobody but my bro-'ther can do any-thing with her, I am 'ſure.'

'Don't think of your brother's com-'ing up,' ſaid my aunt, ſtill in a low voice—'He is too furious. I ſee no 'obſtinacy, no perverſeneſs, in her man-'ner! If your brother comes, I will 'not be anſwerable for the conſe-'quences: for I thought twice or thrice 'ſhe would have gone into fits.'

'O Madam, ſhe has a ſtrong heart! '—And you ſee there is no prevailing 'with her, though you were upon your 'knees to her.'

My ſiſter left my aunt muſing at the window, with her back towards us; and took that opportunity to inſult me ſtill more barbarouſly: for, ſtepping to my cloſet, ſhe took up the patterns which my mother had ſent me up, and bringing them to me, ſhe ſpread them upon the chair by me; and, offering one, and then another, upon her ſleeve and ſhoulder, thus ſhe ran on, with great ſeeming tranquillity; but whiſper-ingly, that my aunt might not hear her. 'This, Clary, is a pretty pat-'tern enough: but *this* is quite *charm-'ing!* I would adviſe you to make 'your appearance in it. And *this*, 'were I you, ſhould be my wedding 'night-gown—And *this* my ſecond 'dreſſed ſuit! Won't you give orders, 'love, to have your grandmother's 'jewels new-ſet?—Or will you think 'to ſhew away in the new ones Mr. 'Solmes intends to preſent to you? 'He talks of laying out two or three 'thouſand pounds in preſents, child! 'Dear heart!—How gorgeouſly will 'you be arrayed!—What! ſilent, my 'dear! Mamma Norton's *ſweet dear!* 'What! ſilent ſtill?—But, Clary, 'won't you have a velvet ſuit? It 'would cut a great figure in a country 'church you know: and the weather 'may bear it for a month yet to come. 'Crimſon velvet, ſuppoſe! Such a fine 'complexion as yours, how it would 'be ſet off by it! What an agreeable 'bluſh would it give you!—High-ho!' (mocking me; for I ſighed to be thus fooled with) 'And do you ſigh, love? 'Well then, as it will be a ſolemn 'wedding, what think you of *black* 'velvet, child?—Silent ſtill, Clary!— 'Black velvet, ſo fair as you are, with 'thoſe charming eyes gleaming through 'a wintry cloud, like an April ſun! '—Does not Lovelace tell you they are 'charming eyes!—How lovely will 'you appear to every-one!—What! 'ſilent ſtill, love!—But about your 'laces, Clary!'—

She would have gone on ſtill further, had not my aunt advanced towards us, wiping her eyes—'What! whiſpering, 'ladies! You ſeem ſo eaſy and ſo pleaſed, 'Miſs Harlowe, with your private con-'ference, that I hope I ſhall carry 'down good news.'

'I am only giving her my opinion 'of her patterns, *here*.—Unaſked in-'deed; but ſhe ſeems, by her ſilence, 'to approve of my judgment.'

'O Bella!' ſaid I, 'that Mr. Love-'lace had not taken you at your word! '—You had before now been exer-'ciſing your judgment on your own 'account: and *I* had been happy, as 'well as *you!* Was it my fault, I pray 'you, that it was not ſo?'

O how ſhe raved!

'To be ſo ready to *give*, Bella, and 'ſo loth to *take*, is not very fair in 'you.'

The poor Bella deſcended to call names.

'Why, ſiſter,' ſaid I, 'you are as 'angry, as if there were more in the 'hint, than poſſibly might be deſign-

'ed. My wish is sincere, for both our 'sakes!—for the whole family's sake! '—And what (good now) is there in 'it?—Do not, do not, dear Bella, give 'me cause to suspect, that I have found 'a reason for your behaviour to me; 'and which till now was wholly unac-'countable from sister to sister.'

'Fie, fie, Clary!' said my aunt.

My sister was more and more out-rageous.

'O how much fitter,' said I, 'to be 'a *jest*, than a *jester!*—But now, Bella, 'turn the glass to you, and see how 'poorly sits the robe upon your own 'shoulders, which you have been so un-'mercifully fixing upon mine!'

'Fie, fie, Miss Clary!' repeated my aunt.

'And fie, fie, likewise, good Ma-'dam, to Miss Harlowe, you would 'say, were you to have heard her bar-'barous insults!'

'Let us go, Madam,' said my sister, with great violence; 'let us leave the 'creature to swell till she bursts with 'her own poison.—The last time I will 'ever come near her, in the mind I am 'in!'

'It is so easy a thing,' returned I, 'were 'I to be mean enough to follow an ex-'ample that is so censureable in the set-'ter of it, to vanquish such a teazing 'spirit as yours with it's own blunt 'weapons, that I am amazed you will 'provoke me!—Yet, Bella, since you 'will go,' (for she had hurried to the door) 'forgive me. I forgive you. And 'you have a double reason to do so, both 'from eldership, and from the offence 'so studiously given to one in afflic-'tion.—But may *you* be happy, though 'I never shall! May *you* never have 'half the trials I have had! Be *this* your 'comfort, that you cannot have a sister 'to treat *you*, as you have treated *me!*—'And so God bless you!'

'O thou art a——' And down she flung without saying what.

'Permit me, Madam,' said I to my aunt, sinking down, and clasping her knees with my arms, 'to detain you one 'moment—Not to say any-thing about 'my poor sister—She is her own punish-'er—Only to thank you for all your 'condescending goodness to me. I only 'beg of you not to impute to obstinacy 'the immoveableness I have shewn to 'so tender a friend; and to forgive me 'every thing I have said or done amiss 'in your presence; for it has not pro-'ceeded from inward rancour to the 'poor Bella. But I will be bold to 'say, that neither she, nor my brother, 'nor even my father himself, knows 'what a heart they have set a bleed-'ing.'

I saw, to my comfort, what effect my sister's absence wrought for me.—'Rise, 'my noble-minded niece!—charming 'creature!'—[Those were her kind words] 'kneel not to me!—Keep to 'yourself what I now say to you.—I 'admire you more than I can express—'And if you can forbear claiming your 'estate, and can resolve to avoid Love-'lace, you will continue to be the 'greatest miracle I ever knew at your 'years—But I must hasten down after 'your sister.—These are my last words 'to you; Conform to your father's 'will, if you possibly can. How me-'ritorious will it be in you to do so! 'Pray to God to *enable* you to con-'form. You don't know what may 'be done.'

'Only, my dear aunt, one word, *one* 'word more,' (for she was going.)—'Speak all you can for my dear Mrs. 'Norton. She is but low in the world: 'should ill health overtake her, she 'may not know how to live without 'my mamma's favour. I shall have 'no means to help her; for I will want 'necessaries before I will assert my 'right: and I do assure you, she has 'said so many things to me in behalf 'of my submitting to my father's will, 'that her arguments have not a little 'contributed to make me resolve to 'avoid the extremities, which, never-'theless, I pray to God they do not at 'last force me upon. And yet they 'deprive me of her advice, and think 'unjustly of one of the most excellent 'of women.'

'I am glad to hear you say this: 'and take *this* and *this*, and *this*, my 'charming niece,' (for so she called me almost at every word; kissing me earnestly, and clasping her arms about my neck:) 'and God protect you, and 'direct you! But you *must* submit: 'indeed you *must*. Some *one day* in a 'month from *this*, is all the choice that 'is left you.'

And this, I suppose, was the doom my sister called for; yet not worse than what had been pronounced upon me before,

She

She repeated these last sentences louder than the former. 'And remember, Miss,' added she, 'it is your 'duty to comply.'—And down she went, leaving me with my heart full, and my eyes running over.

The very repetition of this, fills me with almost equal concern, to that which I felt at the time.

I must lay down my pen. Mistinesses which give to my deluged eye the appearance of all the colours in the rainbow, will not permit me to write on.

WEDNESDAY, FIVE O'CLOCK.

I WILL now add a few lines—My aunt, as she went down from me, was met at the foot of the stairs by my sister, who seemed to think she had staid a good while after her: and hearing her last words prescribing to me implicit duty, praised her for it, and exclaimed against my obstinacy. 'Did you ever hear of 'such perverseness, Madam?' said she. 'Could you have thought, that *your* 'Clarissa, and *every-body's* Clarissa, was 'such a girl!—And who, as *you* said, '*is* to submit, her *father* or *she?*'

My aunt said something in answer to her, compassionating me, as I thought, by her accent: but I heard not the words.

Such a strange perseverance in a measure so unreasonable!—But my brother and sister are continually misrepresenting all I say and do; and I am deprived of the opportunity of defending myself!—My sister says *, that had they thought me such a championess, they would not have engaged with me: and now, not knowing how to reconcile my supposed obstinacy with my general character, and natural temper, they seem to hope to tire me out, and resolve to vary their measures accordingly. My brother, you see †, is determined to carry this point, or to abandon Harlowe-Place, and never to see it more.—So they are to lose a son, or to conquer a daughter—the perversest and most ungrateful that ever parents had!—This is the light he places things in: and has undertaken, it seems, to subdue me, if *his* advice be followed. It will be *further* tried; of *that* I am convinced; and what will be their next measure, who can divine?

I shall dispatch, with this, my answer to yours of Sunday last, begun on Monday ‡; but which is not yet quite finished. It is too long to copy: I have not time for it. In it I have been very free with you, my dear, in more places than one. I cannot say, that I am pleased with all I have written—Yet will not now alter it.—My mind is not at ease enough for the subject.—Don't be angry with me. Yet, if you can excuse one or two passages, it will be, because they were written by *your*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

* See Page 132. † In this letter, Page 137. ‡ See Letter XL.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

THE

HISTORY

OF

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

LETTER I.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT, MARCH 22.

ANGRY!—What ſhould I be angry for?—I am mightily pleaſed with your freedom, as you call it. I only wonder at your patience with me; that's all. I am ſorry I gave you the trouble of ſo long a letter upon the occaſion*, notwithſtanding the pleaſure I received in reading it.

I believe you did *not* intend reſerves to me; for two reaſons I believe you did not: firſt, becauſe you *ſay* you did not; next, becauſe you have not *as yet* been able to convince *yourſelf* how it is to be with you; and perſecuted as you are, how ſo to ſeparate the effects that ſpring from the two cauſes, [*perſecution* and *love*] as to give to each it's particular due. But this I believe I hinted to you once before; and ſo will ſay no more upon this ſubject at preſent.

Robin ſays, you had but juſt depoſited your laſt parcel when he took it: for he was there but half an hour before, and found nothing. He had ſeen my impatience, and loitered about, being willing to bring me ſomething from you, if poſſible.

My couſin Jenny Fynnett is here, and deſires to be my bedfellow to-night. So I ſhall not have an opportunity to ſit down with that ſerioufneſs and attention which the ſubjects of yours require. For ſhe is all prate, you know, and loves to ſet *me* a prating; yet comes upon a very grave occaſion—To procure my mother to go with her to her grandmother Larkin, who has been long bed-ridden; and at laſt has taken it into her head that ſhe is mortal, and therefore will make her will; a work ſhe was till now extremely averſe to; but it muſt be upon condition that my mother, who is her diſtant relation, will go to her, and adviſe her as to the particulars of it: for ſhe has an high opinion, as every-one elſe has, of my mother's judgment in all matters relating to wills, ſettlements, and ſuch-like notable affairs.

Mrs. Larkin lives about ſeventeen miles off; and as my mother cannot endure to lie out of her own houſe, ſhe propoſes to ſet out early in the morning, that ſhe might be able to get back again at night. So, to-morrow I ſhall be at your devotion from day-light to day-light; nor will I be at home to anybody.

As to the impertinent man, I have

* See Vol. I. Letter xxxvii. for the occaſion; and Letters xxxviii. xl. of the ſame volume, for the freedom Clariſſa apologizes for.

put

put him upon escorting the two ladies, in order to attend my mother home at night. Such expeditions as these, and to give us women a little air of vanity and assuredness at publick places, is all that I know these dangling fellows are good for.

I have hinted before, that I could almost wish my mother and Mr. Hickman would make a match of it: and I here repeat my wishes. What signifies a difference of fifteen or twenty years; especially when the lady has spirits that will make her young a long time, and the lover is a *mighty* sober man?—I think verily, I could like him better for a papa, than for a nearer relation: and they are *strange* admirers of one another.

But allow me a perhaps still better (and, as to *years*, more suitable and happier) disposal; for the *man* at least—What think you, my dear, of compromising with your friends, by rejecting *both* your men, and encouraging my parader?—If your liking one of the two go no farther than *conditional*, I believe it will do. A rich thought, if it obtain your approbation! In this light, I should have a prodigious respect for Mr. Hickman; more by half than I can have for the other. The vein is opened—Shall I let it flow? How difficult to withstand constitutional foibles!

Hickman is certainly a man more in your taste than any of those who have hitherto been brought to address you. He is mighty sober, mighty grave, and all that. Then you have told me, that he is your favourite. But that is because he is my mother's perhaps. The man would certainly rejoice at the transfer; or he must be a greater fool than I take him to be.

O but your fierce lover would knock him o'the head—I forgot that!—What makes me incapable of seriousness when I write about this Hickman?—Yet the man so good a sort of man in the main? —But who is perfect? This is one of my foibles. And it is something for you to chide me for.

You believe me to be very happy in my prospects in relation to him: because you are so very unhappy in the foolish usage you meet with, you are apt (as I suspect) to think *that* tolerable which otherwise would be far from being so. I dare say, you would not, with all your grave airs, like him for yourself; except, being addressed by Solmes and him, you were obliged to have one of them.—I have given you a test. Let me see what you will say to it.

For my own part, I confess to you, that I have great exceptions to Hickman. *He* and *wedlock* never yet once entered into my head at one time. Shall I give you my free thoughts of him? —Of his *best* and his *worst*; and that as if I were writing to one who knows him not?—I think I will. Yet it is impossible I should do it gravely. The subject won't bear to be so treated in my opinion. We are not come so far as that yet, if ever we shall: and to do it in another strain, ill becomes my present real concern for you.

* *

Here I was interrupted on the honest man's account. He has been here these two hours—courting the mother for the daughter, I suppose—Yet she wants no courting neither: it is well one of us does; else the man would have nothing but halcyon; and be remiss, and saucy of course.

He was going. His horses at the door. My mother sent for me down, pretending to want to say something to me.

Something she said when I came that signified nothing—Evidently, for no reason called me, but to give me an opportunity to see what a fine bow her man could make; and that she might wish me a good-night. She knows I am not over-ready to oblige him with my company, if I happen to be otherwise engaged. I could not help an air a little upon the fretful, when I found she had nothing of moment to say to me, and when I saw her intention.

She smiled off the visible fretfulness, that the man might go away in good humour with himself.

He bowed to the ground, and would have taken my hand, his whip in the other. I did not like to be so companioned: I withdrew my hand, but touched his elbow with a motion, as if from his low bow I had supposed him falling, and would have helped him up—'A sad slip, it might have been!' said I.

'A mad girl!' smiled it off my mother.

He was put quite out; took his horse-

horſe-bridle, ſtumped back, back, back, bowing, till he run againſt his ſervant. I laughed. He mounted his horſe. I mounted up ſtairs, after a little lecture. —And my head is ſo filled with him, that I muſt reſume my intention; in hopes to divert you for a few moments.

Take it then—His *beſt* and his *worſt*, as I ſaid before.

Hickman is a ſort of fiddling, buſy, yet, to borrow a word from you, *unbuſy* man: has a great deal to do, and ſeems to me to diſpatch nothing. Irreſolute and changeable in every-thing, but in teazing me with his nonſenſe; which yet, it is evident, he muſt continue upon my mother's intereſt more than upon his own hopes; for none have I given him.

Then I have a quarrel againſt his face, though in his perſon, for a well-thriven man, tolerably genteel—Not to his features ſo much neither; for what, as you have often obſerved, are features in a man?—But Hickman, with ſtrong lines, and big cheek and chin-bones, has not the manlineſs in his aſpect, which Lovelace has with the moſt regular and agreeable features.

Then what a ſet and formal mortal he is in ſome things!—I have not been able yet to laugh him out of his long bib and beads. Indeed, that is, becauſe my mother thinks they become him; and I would not be ſo free with him, as to own I ſhould *chuſe* to have him leave it off. If he did, ſo particular is the man, he would certainly, if left to himſelf, fall into a King-William's-Cravat, or ſome ſuch antique chin-cuſhion, as by the pictures of that prince one ſees was then the faſhion.

As to his dreſs in general, he cannot indeed be called a ſloven, but ſometimes he is too gaudy, at other times too plain, to be uniformly elegant. And for his manners, he makes ſuch a buſtle with them, and about them, as would induce one to ſuſpect that they are more ſtrangers than familiars to him. You, I know, lay this to his fearfulneſs of diſobliging or offending. Indeed your *over-doers* generally give the offence they endeavour to avoid.

The man however is honeſt; is of family; has a clear and good eſtate; and may one day be a baronet, an't pleaſe you. He is humane and benevolent, tolerably generous, as people ſay; and as *I* might ſay too, if I would accept of his bribes; which he offers in hopes of having them all back again, and the *bribed* into the bargain. A method taken by all corrupters, from old Satan, to the loweſt of his ſervants. Yet, to ſpeak in the language of a perſon I am bound to honour, he is deemed a *prudent* man; that is to ſay, a *good manager*.

Then I cannot but confeſs, that now I like not any-body better, whatever I did once.

He is no fox-hunter: he keeps a pack indeed; but prefers not his hounds to his fellow-creatures. No bad ſign for a wife, I own. He loves his horſe; but diſlikes racing in a gaming way, as well as all ſorts of gaming. Then he is ſober; modeſt; they *ſay*, virtuous; in ſhort, has qualities that mothers would be fond of in a huſband for their daughters; and for which perhaps their daughters would be the happier could they judge as well for themſelves, as experience poſſibly may teach *them* to judge for their *future* daughters.

Nevertheleſs, to own the truth, I cannot ſay I love the man; nor, I believe, ever ſhall.

Strange! that theſe ſober fellows cannot have a decent ſprightlineſs, a modeſt aſſurance with them! Something debonnaire; which need not be ſeparated from that awe and reverence, when they addreſs a woman, which ſhould ſhew the ardor of their paſſion, rather than the ſheepiſhneſs of their nature; for who knows not that love delights in taming the lion-hearted? That thoſe of the ſex, who are moſt conſcious of their own defect in point of courage, naturally *require*, and therefore *as* naturally *prefer*, the man who has moſt of it, as the moſt able to give them the requiſite protection? That the greater their own cowardice, as it would be called in a man, the greater is their delight in ſubjects of heroiſm? As may be obſerved in their readings; which turns upon difficulties encountered, battles fought, and enemies overcome, four or five hundred by the proweſs of one ſingle hero, the *more* improbable the *better*: in ſhort, that *their* man ſhould be a hero to every-one living but themſelves; and to them know no bound to his humility. A woman has ſome glory in ſubduing a heart no man living can appall; and hence too often the bravo, aſſuming the hero, and making

himſelf paſs for one, ſucceeds as only a hero ſhould.

But as for honeſt Hickman, the good man is ſo *generally* meek, as I imagine, that I know not whether I have any *preference* paid me in his obſequiouſneſs. And then, when I rate him, he ſeems to be ſo naturally fitted for rebuke, and ſo much expects it, that I know not how to diſappoint him, whether he juſt then deſerve it, or not. I am ſure, he has puzzled me many a time when I have ſeen him look penitent for faults he has not committed, whether to pity or laugh at him.

You and I have often *retroſpected* the faces and minds of grown people; that is to ſay, have formed images from their preſent appearances, outſide and in, (as far as the manners of the perſons would juſtify us in the latter) what ſort of figures they made when boys and girls. And I'll tell you the lights in which HICKMAN, SOLMES, and LOVELACE, our three heroes, have appeared to me, ſuppoſing them boys at ſchool.

Solmes I have imagined to be a little ſordid pilfering rogue, who would purloin from every-body, and beg every boy's bread and butter from him; while, as I have heard a reptile brag, he would in a winter-morning ſpit upon his thumbs, and ſpread his own with it, that he might keep it all to himſelf.

Hickman, a great overgrown, lank-haired, chubby boy, who would be hunched and punched by every-body; and go home with his finger in his eye, and tell his mother.

While Lovelace I have ſuppoſed a curl-pated villain, full of fire, fancy, and miſchief; an orchard-robber, a wall-climber, a horſe-rider without ſaddle or bridle, neck or nothing: a ſturdy-rogue, in ſhort, who would kick and cuff, and do no right, and take no wrong of any-body; would get his head broke, then a plaiſter for it, or let it heal of itſelf; while he went on to do more miſchief, and if not to get, to deſerve broken bones. And the ſame diſpoſitions have grown up with them, and diſtinguiſh them as *men*, with no very material alteration.

Only, that all men are monkeys more or leſs, or elſe that you and I ſhould have ſuch baboons as theſe to chuſe out of, is a mortifying thing, my dear.

I am ſenſible, that I am a little out of ſeaſon in treating thus ludicrouſly the ſubject I am upon, while you are ſo unhappy; and if my manner does not divert you, as my flightineſſes uſed to do, I am inexcuſable both to you, and to my own heart: which, I do aſſure you, notwithſtanding my ſeeming levity, is wholly in your caſe.

As this letter is entirely whimſical, I will not ſend it until I can accompany it with ſomething more ſolid and better ſuited to your unhappy circumſtances; that is to ſay, to the preſent ſubject of our correſpondence. To-morrow, as I told you, will be wholly my own, and of conſequence yours. Adieu, therefore, till then.

LETTER II.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

TUESDAY MORN. 7 O'CLOCK.

MY mother and couſin are already gone off in our chariot and four, attended by their doughty ſquire on horſeback, and he by two of his own ſervants, and one of my mother's. They both love parade when they go abroad, at leaſt in compliment to one another; which ſhews, that each *thinks* the other does. Robin is your ſervant and mine, and nobody's elſe—And the day is all my own.

I muſt begin with blaming you, my dear, for your reſolution not to litigate for your right, if occaſion were to be given you. Juſtice is due to ourſelves, as well as to every-body elſe. Still more muſt I blame you for declaring to your aunt and ſiſter, that you will *not*: ſince (as they will tell it to your father and brother) the declaration muſt needs give advantage to ſpirits who have ſo little of that generoſity for which you are ſo much diſtinguiſhed.

There never was a ſpirit in the world that would inſult where it *dared*, but it would creep and cringe where it dared *not*. Let me remind you of a ſentence of your own, the occaſion for which I have forgotten: That little ſpirits will always accommodate themſelves to the temper of thoſe they would work upon—Will fawn upon a ſturdy-tempered

tempered perſon—Will inſult the meek—And another given to Miſs Biddulph, upon an occaſion you cannot forget—If we aſſume a dignity in what we ſay and do, and take care not to diſgrace by arrogance our own aſſumption, every-body will treat us with reſpect and deference.

I remember that you once made an obſervation, which you ſaid, you was obliged to Mrs. Norton for, and ſhe to her father, upon an excellent preacher, who was but an indifferent liver: That to excel in theory, and to excel in practice, generally required different talents; which did not always meet in the ſame perſon. Do you, my dear, (to whom theory and practice are the ſame thing in almoſt every laudable quality) apply the obſervation to yourſelf, in this particular caſe, where reſolution is required; and where the performance of the will of the defunct is the queſtion—No more to be diſpenſed with by *you* in whoſe favour it was made, than by any-body elſe who have only themſelves in view by breaking through it.

I know how much you deſpiſe riches in the main: but yet it behoves you to remember, that in one inſtance you yourſelf have judged them valuable—In that they put it into our power to *lay* obligations; while the want of that power puts a perſon under a neceſſity of receiving favours—Receiving them perhaps from grudging and narrow ſpirits, who know not how to confer them with that grace, which gives the principal merit to a beneficent action.—Reflect upon this, my dear, and ſee how it agrees with the declaration you have made to your aunt and ſiſter, that you would not reſume your eſtate, were you to be turned out of doors, and reduced to indigence and want. Their very fears that you *will* reſume, point out to you the *neceſſity* of reſuming upon the treatment you meet with.

I own, that (at firſt reading) I was much affected with your mother's letter ſent with the patterns. A ſtrange meaſure however from a mother; for *ſhe* did not intend to inſult you; and I cannot but lament that ſo ſenſible and ſo fine a woman ſhould ſtoop to ſo much art as that letter is written with: and which alſo appears in ſome of the converſations you have given me an account of. See you not in her paſſiveneſs, what boiſterous ſpirits can obtain from gentler, merely by teazing and ill-nature?

I know the pride they have always taken in calling you an Harlowe—*Clariſſa Harlowe*, ſo *formal* and ſo *ſet*, at every word, when they are grave or proudly ſolemn.—Your mother has learnt it of them—And as in *marriage*, ſo in *will*, has been taught to bury her own ſuperior name and family in theirs. I have often thought that the ſame ſpirit governed them, in this piece of affectation, and others of the like nature, (as *Harlowe* Place, and ſo-forth, though not the elder brother's or paternal ſeat) as governed the tyrant Tudor*, who marrying Elizabeth, the heireſs of the houſe of York, made himſelf a title to a throne, which he would not otherwiſe have had; (being but a baſe deſcendant of the Lancaſter line) and proved a gloomy and vile huſband to her; for no other cauſe, than becauſe ſhe had laid him under obligations which his pride would not permit him to own.—Nor would the unprincely wretch marry her till he was in poſſeſſion of the crown, that he might not be ſuppoſed to owe it to her claim.

You have chidden me, and again will, I doubt not, for the liberties I take with ſome of your relations. But, my dear, need I tell *you*, that pride in *ourſelves* muſt, and for ever will, provoke contempt, and bring down upon us abaſement from *others?*—Have we not, in the caſe of a celebrated bard, obſerved, that thoſe who aim at *more* than their due, will be refuſed the honours they may juſtly claim?—I am very loth to offend you; yet I cannot help ſpeaking of your relations, as well as of others, as I think they deſerve. *Praiſe* or *diſpraiſe*, is the reward or puniſhment which the world confers or inflicts on *merit* or *demerit*; and, for my part, I neither can nor will confound them in the application. I deſpiſe them all, but your mother: indeed I do. And as for her—But I will ſpare the good lady for your ſake—And one argument, indeed, I think may be pleaded in her favour, in the preſent contention—She who has for ſo many years, and with ſuch abſolute re-

* Henry VII.

ſignation, borne what ſhe has borne, to the ſacrifice of her own will, may think it an eaſier talk than another perſon can imagine it, for her daughter to give up *her's*. But to think to whoſe inſtigation all this is originally owing —God forgive me; but with ſuch uſage I ſhould have been with Lovelace before now! Yet remember, my dear, that the ſtep which would not be wondered at from ſuch an haſty-tempered creature as me, would be inexcuſable in ſuch a conſiderate perſon as you.

After your mother has been thus drawn in againſt her judgment, I am the leſs ſurprized, that your aunt Hervey ſhould go along with her; ſince the two ſiſters never ſeparate. I have enquired into the nature of the obligation which Mr. Hervey's indifferent conduct in his affairs has laid him under—It is only, it ſeems, that your brother has paid off for him a mortgage upon one part of his eſtate, which the mortgagee was about to foreclose; and taken it upon himſelf. A ſmall favour (as he has ample ſecurity in his hands) from kindred to kindred: but ſuch a one, it is plain, as has laid the whole family of the Herveys under obligation to the ungenerous lender, who has treated him, and his aunt too, (as Miſs Dolly Hervey has privately complained) with the leſs ceremony ever ſince.

Muſt I, my dear, call ſuch a creature your *brother?*—I believe I muſt —Becauſe he is your *father's ſon*. There is no harm, I hope, in ſaying that.

I am concerned, that you ever wrote at all to him. It was taking too much notice of him: it was adding to his ſelf-ſignificance; and a call upon him to treat you with inſolence.—A call which you might have been aſſured he would not fail to anſwer.

But ſuch a pretty maſter as this, to run riot againſt ſuch a man as Lovelace; who had taught him to put his ſword into his ſcabbard, when he had pulled it out by accident!—Theſe indoor inſolents, who, turning themſelves into bugbears, frighten women, children, and ſervants, are generally cravens among men. Were he to come fairly croſs me, and ſay to my face ſome of the free things which I am told he has ſaid of me behind my back, or that (as by your account) he has ſaid of our ſex, I would take upon myſelf to aſk him two or three queſtions; although he were to ſend *me* a challenge likewiſe.

I repeat, You know that I will ſpeak my mind, and *write* it too. He is not *my* brother. Can you ſay, he is *yours?* —So, for your life, if you are juſt, you can't be angry with me: for would you ſide with a *falſe brother* againſt a *true friend?* A brother may *not* be a friend: but a friend will be *always* a brother—*Mind that*, as your uncle *Tony* ſays!

I cannot deſcend ſo low, as to take very particular notice of the epiſtles of theſe poor ſouls, whom you call *uncles*. Yet I love to divert myſelf with ſuch groteſque characters too. But I know *them*, and love *you*; and ſo cannot make the jeſt of them which their abſurdities call for.

You chide me, my dear*, for my freedoms with relations ſtill nearer and dearer to you, than either uncles or brother or ſiſter. You had better have permitted me (uncorrected) to have taken my own way. Do not thoſe freedoms naturally ariſe from the ſubject before us? And from *whom* ariſes that ſubject, I pray you? Can you for one quarter of an hour put yourſelf in my place, or in the place of thoſe who are ſtill more indifferent to the caſe than I can be—If you *can*—But although I have you not often at advantage, I will not puſh you.

Permit me, however, to ſubjoin, That well may your father love your mother, as you ſay he does. A wife who has no will but his! But were there not, think you, ſome ſtruggles between them at firſt, gout out of the queſtion?—Your mother, when a maiden, had, as I have heard, (and it is very likely) a good ſhare of thoſe lively ſpirits which ſhe liked in your father. She has none of them now. How came they to be diſſipated?—Ah! my dear!—She has been too long reſident in Trophonius's Cave, I doubt†.

Let me add one reflection upon this ſubject, and ſo entitle myſelf to your correction for all at once.—It is upon the conduct of thoſe wives (for you and I know more than *one* ſuch) who

* See Vol. I. Letter XXVIII.

† Spectator, Vol. VIII. No. 599.

can

can ſuffer themſelves to be out-bluſtered and out-gloomed of their own wills, inſtead of being fooled out of them by acts of tenderneſs and complaiſance.—I wiſh, that it does not demonſtrate too evidently, that, with ſome of the ſex, inſolent controul is a more efficacious ſubduer than kindneſs or conceſſion. Upon my life, my dear, I have often thought, that many of us are mere babies in matrimony: perverſe fools, when too much indulged and humoured; creeping ſlaves, when treated harſhly. But ſhall it be ſaid, that *fear* makes us more gentle obligers than *love?*—Forbid it, honour! forbid it, gratitude! forbid it, juſtice! that any woman of ſenſe ſhould give occaſion to have this ſaid of her!

Did I think you would have any manner of doubt, from the ſtyle or contents of this letter, whoſe ſaucy pen it is that has run on at this rate, I would write my name at length; ſince it comes too much from my heart to diſavow it: but at preſent the initials ſhall ſerve; and I will go on again directly.

A. H.

LETTER III.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

THURSDAY MORN. 10 O'CLOCK (MAR. 23.)

I Will poſtpone, or perhaps paſs by, ſeveral obſervations which I had to make on other parts of your letters; to acquaint you, that Mr. Hickman, when in London, found an opportunity to enquire after Mr. Lovelace's town life and converſation.

At the Cocoa Tree in Pall Mall he fell in with two of his intimates, the one named Belton, the other Mowbray; both very free of ſpeech, and probably as free in their lives: but the waiters paid them great reſpect; and on Mr. Hickman's enquiry after their characters, called them men of fortune and honour.

They began to talk of Mr. Lovelace of their own accord; and upon ſome gentlemen in the room aſking, When they expected him in town, anſwered, That very day. Mr. Hickman (as they both went on praiſing Lovelace) ſaid, He had indeed heard, that Mr. Lovelace was a very fine gentleman—and was proceeding, when one of them, interrupting him, ſaid, 'Only, Sir, the fineſt gentleman in 'the world; that's all.'

And ſo he led them on to expatiate more particularly on his qualities; which they were very fond of doing: but ſaid not one ſingle word in behalf of his morals—*Mind that* alſo, in your uncle's ſtyle.

Mr. Hickman ſaid, That Mr. Lovelace was very happy, as he underſtood, in the eſteem of the ladies; and, ſmiling, to make them believe he did not think amiſs of it, that he puſhed his good fortune as far as it would go.

'Well put, Mr. Hickman!' thought I; equally grave and ſage—'Thou 'ſeemeſt not to be a ſtranger to their 'dialect, as I ſuppoſe this is.' But I ſaid nothing; for I have often tried to find out this *mighty* ſober man of my mother's: but hitherto have only to ſay, that he is either very moral, or very cunning.

'No doubt of it,' replied one of them; and out came an oath, with a 'Who would not?'—That he did as every young fellow would do.

'Very true!' ſaid my mother's puritan—'But I hear he is in treaty with 'a fine lady.'

So he was, Mr. Belton ſaid—'The 'devil fetch her!' [Vile brute!] for ſhe engroſſed all his time—But that the lady's family ought to be—ſomething—[Mr. Hickman deſired to be excuſed repeating what—though he had repeated what was worſe] and might dearly repent their uſage of a man of his family and merit.

'Perhaps they may think him too 'wild,' cried Hickman: 'and theirs 'is, I hear, a very ſober family.'

'SOBER!' ſaid one of them: 'a 'good honeſt word, Dick!—Where 'the devil has it lain all this time?—'D— me if I have heard of it in this 'ſenſe, ever ſince I was at college! 'And then!' ſaid he, 'we bandied it 'about among twenty of us, as an 'obſolete.'

Theſe, my dear, are Mr. Lovelace's companions: you'll be pleaſed to take *notice of that!*

Mr. Hickman ſaid, This put him out of countenance.

I ſtared

I ſtared at him, and with ſuch a meaning in my eyes, as he knew how to take; and ſo was out of countenance again.

Don't you remember, my dear, who it was that told a young gentleman deſigned for the gown, who owned that he was apt to be too eaſily put out of countenance when he came into free company; That it was a bad ſign; that it looked as if his morals were not proof; but that his good diſpoſition ſeemed rather the effect of accident and education, than of ſuch a choice as was founded upon principle? And don't you know the leſſon the very ſame young lady gave him, To endeavour to ſtem and diſcountenance vice, and to glory in being an advocate in all companies for virtue; particularly obſerving, That it was natural for a man to ſhun or to give up what he was aſhamed of? Which ſhe ſhould be ſorry to think *his* caſe on this occaſion: adding, that vice was a coward, and would hide it's head, when oppoſed by ſuch a virtue as had preſence of mind, and a full perſuaſion of it's own rectitude to ſupport it. The lady, you may remember, modeſtly put her doctrine into the mouth of a worthy preacher, Dr. Lewen, as ſhe uſes to do, when ſhe has a mind not to be thought to be what ſhe is at ſo early an age; and that it may give more weight to any-thing *ſhe hit upon, that might appear tolerable*, was her modeſt manner of ſpeech.

Mr. Hickman, upon the whole, profeſſed to me, upon his *ſecond recovery*, that he had no reaſon to think well of Mr. Lovelace's morals, from what he heard of him in town: yet his two intimates talked of his being *more regular* than he *uſed to be*: that he had made a very good reſolution, *that* of old Tom Wharton was the expreſſion, That he would never *give* a challenge, nor *refuſe* one; which they praiſed in him highly: that, in ſhort, he was a very brave fellow, and the moſt agreeable companion in the world; and would one day make a great figure in his country; ſince there was nothing he was not capable of.

I am afraid that his laſt aſſertion is too true. And this, my dear, is all that Mr. Hickman could pick up about him: and is it not enough to determine ſuch a mind as yours, if not *already* determined?

Yet it muſt be ſaid too, that if there be a woman in the world that can reclaim him, it is you. And, by your account of his behaviour in the interview between you, I own I have ſome hope of him. At leaſt, this I will ſay, that all the arguments he then uſed with you, ſeem to be juſt and right: and if you *are* to be his—But no more of that: he cannot, after all, deſerve you.

LETTER IV.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON, MARCH 23.

AN unexpected viſitor has turned the courſe of my thoughts, and changed the ſubject I had intended to purſue. The only one for whom I would have diſpenſed with my reſolution not to ſee any-body all the dedicated day: a viſitor, whom, according to Mr. Hickman's report from the expectations of his libertine friends, I ſuppoſed to be in town.—Now, my dear, have I ſaved myſelf the trouble of telling you, that it was your too-agreeable rake. Our ſex is ſaid to love to trade in ſurprizes: yet have I, by my promptitude, ſurprized myſelf out of mine. I had intended, you muſt know, to run twice the length, before I had ſuffered you ſo much as to gueſs who, and whether man or woman, my viſitor was: but ſince you have the diſcovery at ſo cheap a rate, you are welcome to it.

The end of his coming was, to engage my intereſt with my *charming friend*; and as he was ſure that I knew all your mind, to acquaint him what he had to truſt to.

He mentioned what had paſſed in the interview between you: but could not be ſatisfied with the reſult of it, and with the little ſatisfaction he had obtained from you; the malice of your family to him increaſing, and their cruelty to you not abating. His heart, he told me, was in tumults, for fear you ſhould be prevailed upon in favour of a man deſpiſed by every-body.

He gave me freſh inſtances of indignities caſt upon himſelf by your uncles and brother; and declared, that if you ſuffered yourſelf to be forced into the arms of the man for whoſe ſake he was loaded with undeſerved abuſes, you ſhould

ſhould be one of the youngeſt, as you would be one of the loveliest widows in England: and that he would moreover call your brother to account for the liberties he takes with his character to every-one he meets with.

He propoſed ſeveral ſchemes, for you to chuſe ſome one of them, in order to enable you to avoid the perſecutions you labour under: one I will mention. That you will reſume your eſtate; and if you find difficulties that can be no otherwiſe ſurmounted, that you will, either avowedly or privately, as he had propoſed to you, accept of Lady Betty Lawrance's or Lord M.'s aſſiſtance to inſtate you in it. He declared, that if you did, he would leave abſolutely to your own pleaſure afterwards, and to the advice which your couſin Morden on his arrival ſhould give you, whether to encourage his addreſs, or not, as you ſhould be convinced of the ſincerity of the reformation which his enemies make him ſo much want.

I had now a good opportunity to ſound him, as you wiſhed Mr. Hickman would Lord M. as to the continued or diminiſhed favour of the ladies, and of his lordſhip, towards you, upon their being acquainted with the animoſity of your relations to them, as well as to their kinſman. I laid hold of the opportunity, and he ſatisfied me, by reading ſome paſſages of a letter he had about him, from Lord M. That an alliance with you, and that on the foot of your own ſingle merit, would be the moſt deſirable event to them that could happen: and ſo far to the purpoſe of your wiſhed enquiry does his lordſhip go in this letter, that he aſſures him, that whatever you ſuffer in fortune from the violence of your relations on *his* account, he and Lady Sarah and Lady Betty will join to make it up to him. And yet that the reputation of a family ſo ſplendid, would, no doubt, in a caſe of ſuch importance to the honour of both, make them prefer a general conſent.

I told him, as you yourſelf I knew had done, that you were extremely averſe to Mr. Solmes; and that, might you be left to your own choice, it would be the ſingle life. As to himſelf, I plainly ſaid, That you had great and juſt objections to him on the ſcorce of his careleſs morals: that it was ſurprizing, that men who gave themſelves the liberties he was ſaid to take, ſhould preſume to think, that, whenever they took it into their heads to marry, the moſt virtuous and worthy of the ſex were to fall to their lot: that as to the reſumption, it had been very ſtrongly urged by myſelf, and would be ſtill further urged; though you had been hitherto averſe to that meaſure: that your chief reliance and hopes were upon your couſin Morden: and that to ſuſpend or gain time till he arrived, was, as I believed, your principal aim.

I told him, That with regard to the miſchief he threatened, neither the act nor the menace could ſerve any end but theirs who perſecuted you; as it would give them a pretence for carrying into effect their compulſory projects; and that with the approbation of all the world; ſince he muſt not think the publick would not give it's voice in favour of a violent young man, of no extraordinary character as to morals, who ſhould ſeek to rob a family of eminence of a child ſo valuable; and who threatened, if he could not obtain her in preference to a man choſen by themſelves, that he would avenge himſelf upon them all by acts of violence.

I added, That he was very much miſtaken, if he thought to intimidate *you* by ſuch menaces: for that, though your diſpoſition was all ſweetneſs, yet I knew not a ſteadier temper in the world than yours; nor one more inflexible, (as your friends had found, and would ſtill farther find, if they continued to give occaſion for it's exertion) whenever you thought yourſelf in the right; and that you were ungenerouſly dealt with in matters of too much moment to be indifferent about. 'Miſs Clariſſa 'Harlowe, Mr. Lovelace, let me tell 'you,' ſaid I, 'timid as her foreſight 'and prudence may make her in ſome 'caſes, where ſhe apprehends dangers 'to thoſe ſhe loves, is above fear, in 'points where her honour, and the 'true dignity of her ſex, are concerned. '—In ſhort, Sir, you muſt not think 'to frighten Miſs Clariſſa Harlowe into 'ſuch a mean or unworthy conduct as 'only a weak or unſteady mind can be 'guilty of.'

He was ſo very far from intending to intimidate you, he ſaid, that he beſought me not to mention one word to you of what had paſſed between us: that what he had hinted at, which carried the air

of

of a menace, was owing to the fervor of his spirits, raised by his apprehensions of losing all hope of you for ever; and on a supposition, that you were to be actually forced into the arms of a man you hated: that were this to be the case, he must own, that he should pay very little regard to the world, or it's censures; especially as the menaces of some of your family now, and their triumph over him afterwards, would both provoke and warrant all the vengeance he could take.

He added, that all the countries in the world were alike to him, but on your account: so that whatever he should think fit to do, were you lost to *him*, he should have nothing to apprehend from the laws of this.

I did not like the determined air he spoke this with: he is certainly capable of great rashness.

He palliated a little this fierceness, (which by the way I warmly censured) by saying, That while you remain single, he will bear all the indignities that shall be cast upon him by your family. But would you throw yourself, if you were still farther driven, into any *other* protection, if not Lord M.'s, or that of the ladies of his family, into my mother's *, suppose; or would you go to London to private lodgings, where he would never visit you, unless he had your leave, (and from whence you might make your own terms with your relations;) he would be entirely satisfied; and would, as he had said before, wait the effect of your cousin's arrival, and your free determination as to his own fate.—Adding, That he knew the family so well, and how much fixed they were upon their measures, as well as the absolute dependence they had upon your temper and principles, that he could not but apprehend the worst, while you remained in their power, and under the influence of their persuasion and menaces.

We had a great deal of other discourse: but as the reciting of the rest would be but a repetition of many of the things that passed between you and him in the interview between you in the Wood House, I refer myself to your memory on that occasion †.

And now, my dear, upon the whole, I think it behoves you to make yourself independent: all then will fall right. This man is a violent man. I should wish, methinks, that you should not have either him or Solmes. You will find, if you get out of your brother's and sister's way, what you *can* or *cannot* do, with regard to either. If your relations persist in their foolish scheme, I think I will take his hint, and, at a proper opportunity, sound my mother. Mean time, let me have your clear opinion of the resumption, which I join with Lovelace in advising. You can but see how your demand will work. To *demand*, is not to *litigate*. But be your resolution what it will, do not by any means repeat to them, that you will not assert your right. If they go on to give you provocation, you may have sufficient reason to change your mind: and let them expect that you *will* change it. They have not the generosity to treat you the better for disclaiming the power they know you have. *That*, I think, need not now be told you. I am, my dearest friend, and will be ever, *your most affectionate and faithful*

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER V.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

WEDN. NIGHT, MARCH 22.

ON the report made by my aunt and sister of my *obstinacy*, my assembled relations have taken an *unanimous* resolution (as Betty tells me it is) against me. This resolution you will find signified to me in the inclosed letter from my brother, just now brought me. Be pleased

* Perhaps it will be unnecessary to remind the reader, that although Mr. Lovelace proposes (as above) to Miss Howe, that her fair friend should have recourse to the protection of Mrs. Howe, if farther driven; yet he had artfully taken care, by means of his agent in the Harlowe family, not only to inflame the family against her, but to deprive her of Mrs. Howe's, and of every other protection, being from the first resolved to reduce her to an absolute dependence upon himself. See Vol. I. Letter XXXI.

† See Vol. I. Letter XXXVI.

to

to return it, when perused. I may have occasion for it, in the altercations between my relations and me.

'MISS CLARY,

'I Am commanded to let you know, 'that my father and uncles having 'heard your aunt Hervey's account of 'all that has passed between her and 'you: having heard from your sister 'what sort of treatment she has had 'from you: having recollected all that 'has passed between your mother and 'you: having weighed all your pleas 'and proposals: having taken into consideration their engagements with Mr. 'Solmes; that gentleman's patience, 'and great affection for you; and the 'little opportunity you have given yourself to be acquainted either with his 'merit, or his proposals: having considered two points more; to wit, the 'wounded authority of a father; and 'Mr. Solmes's continual entreaties, '(little as you have deserved regard 'from him) that you may be freed from 'a confinement to which he is desirous 'to attribute your perverseness to him, '[*averseness* I should have said, but let 'it go] he being unable to account 'otherwise for so strong a one, supposing you told truth to your mother, 'when you asserted that your heart *was* '*free*; and which Mr. Solmes is willing to believe, though nobody else 'does—For all these reasons, it is resolved, that you shall go to your uncle Antony's: and you must accordingly prepare yourself so to do. You 'will have but short notice of the day, 'for obvious reasons.

'I will honestly tell you the motive 'for your going: it is a double one; 'first, That they may be sure, that you 'shall not correspond with any-body 'they do not like, (for they find from 'Mrs. Howe, that, by some means or 'other, you *do* correspond with her 'daughter; and, through her, perhaps 'with somebody else:) and next, That 'you may receive the visits of Mr. 'Solmes; which you have thought fit 'to refuse to do here; by which means 'you have deprived yourself of the opportunity of knowing *whom* and *what* 'you have hitherto refused.

'If after one fortnight's conversation 'with Mr. Solmes, and after you have 'heard what your friends shall further 'urge in his behalf, unhardened by 'clandestine correspondences, you shall 'convince them, that Virgil's *Amor* '*omnibus idem* (for the application of 'which I refer you to the Georgick as 'translated by Dryden) is verified in 'you, as well as in the rest of the animal creation; and that you cannot, 'or will not, forego your prepossession 'in favour of the *moral*, the *virtuous*, 'the *pious* Lovelace, [I would please 'you if I could!] it will then be considered, whether to humour you, or to 'renounce you for ever.

'It is hoped, that as you *must* go, 'you will go chearfully. Your uncle 'Antony will make every-thing at his 'house agreeable to you. But indeed 'he won't promise, that he will not, at '*proper times*, draw up the bridge.

'Your visitors, besides Mr. Solmes, 'will be myself, if you permit me that 'honour, Miss Clary; your sister; and, 'as you behave to Mr. Solmes, your 'aunt Hervey, and your uncle Harlowe; and yet the two latter will 'hardly come neither, if they think it 'will be to hear your *whining vocatives*.—Betty Barnes will be your attendant: and I must needs tell you, 'Miss, that we none of us think the 'worse of the faithful maid, for your 'dislike of her; although Betty, who 'would be glad to oblige you, laments 'it as a misfortune.

'Your answer is required, whether 'you *chearfully* consent to go? And 'your indulgent mother bids me remind you from her, That a fortnight's 'visits from Mr. Solmes, are all that 'is meant at present.

'I am, as you shall be pleased to deserve, *yours*, &c.

'JAMES HARLOWE, JUN.'

So here is the master-stroke of my brother's policy! Called upon to consent to go to my uncle Antony's, *avowedly* to receive Mr. Solmes's visits!—A chapel!—A moated-house!—Deprived of the opportunity of corresponding with you!—or of any possibility of escape, should violence be used to compel me to be that odious man's *!

* These violent measures, and the obstinate perseverance of the whole family in them, will be the less wondered at, when it is considered, that all the time, they were but as so many puppets danced upon Mr. Lovelace's wires, as he boasts, Vol. I. Letter XXXI.

Late as it was when I received this insolent letter, I wrote an answer to it directly, that it might be ready for the writer's time of rising. I inclose the rough draught of it. You will see by it how much his vile hint from the Georgick, and his rude one of my *whining vocatives*, have set me up. Besides, as the command to get ready to go to my uncle's is in the name of my father and uncles, it is but to shew a piece of the art they accuse me of, to resent the vile hint I have so much reason to resent in order to palliate my refusal of preparing to go to my uncle's; which refusal would otherwise be interpreted an act of rebellion by my brother and sister: for it seems plain to me, *that they will work but half their ends, if they do not deprive me of my father's and uncles favour, even although it were possible for me to comply with their own terms.*

'YOU might have told me, brother, 'in three lines, what the determination of my friends was; only, 'that then you would not have had 'room to display your pedantry by so 'detestable an allusion or reference to 'the Georgick. Give me leave to tell 'you, Sir, that if *humanity* were a 'branch of your studies at the univer- 'sity, it has not found a genius in you 'for mastering it. Nor is either my sex 'or myself, though a sister, I see, en- 'titled to the least decency from a bro- 'ther, who has studied, as it seems, 'rather to cultivate the malevolence of 'his natural temper, than any tendency 'which one would have hoped his pa- 'rentage, if not his education, might 'have given him to a tolerable polite- 'ness.

'I doubt not, that you will take 'amiss my freedom: but as you have 'deserved it from me, I shall be less 'and less concerned on that score, as 'I see you are more and more intent to 'shew your wit at the expence of jus- 'tice and compassion.

'The time is indeed come that I can 'no longer bear those contempts and 'reflections which a brother least of 'all men is entitled to give. And let me 'beg of you one favour, officious Sir— 'It is *this*, That you will not give 'yourself any concern about a husband 'for *me*, till I shall have the forward- 'ness to propose a wife to *you*. Par- 'don me, Sir; but I cannot help think- 'ing, that could I have the art to *get 'my father* of my side, I should have 'as much right to prescribe for you, as 'you have for me.

'As to the communication you make 'me, I must take upon me to say, that 'although I will receive, as becomes 'me, any of my father's commands; 'yet, as this signification is made by 'a brother, who has shewn of late so 'much of an unbrotherly animosity to 'me, (for no reason in the world that 'I know of, but that he believes he 'has, in me, *one* sister too many for 'his interest) I think myself entitled 'to conclude, that such a letter as you 'have sent me, is all your own—And 'of course to declare, that, while I 'so think it, I will not willingly, nor 'even without violence, go to any 'place, avowedly to receive Mr. 'Solmes's visits.

'I think myself so much entitled to 'resent your infamous hint, and this 'as well for the sake of my sex, as for 'my own, that I ought to declare, as 'I do, that I will not receive any more 'of your letters, unless commanded 'to do so by an authority I never will 'dispute; except in a case where I 'think my *future* as well as *present* 'happiness concerned—And were such 'a case to happen, I am sure my fa- 'ther's harshness will be less owing to 'himself than to you; and to the spe- 'cious absurdities of your ambitious 'and selfish schemes.—Very true, Sir!

'One word more, provoked as I am, 'I will add: that had I been thought 'as really obstinate and perverse as of 'late I am said to be, I should not have 'been so disgracefully treated as I have 'been—Lay your hand upon your heart, 'brother, and say, By whose instiga- 'tions—And examine what I have done 'to deserve to be made thus unhappy, 'and to be obliged to stile myself *your 'injured sister*,

'CL. HARLOWE.'

When, my dear, you have read my answer to my brother's letter, tell me what you think of me?—It *shall go!*

LETTER

LETTER VI.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

THURSDAY MORNING, MARCH 23.

MY letter has ſet them *all* in tumults: for, it ſeems, none of them went home laſt night; and they all were deſired to be preſent to give their advice, if I ſhould refuſe compliance with a command thought ſo reaſonable as it ſeems this is.

Betty tells me, That at firſt my father, in a rage, was for coming up to me himſelf, and for turning me out of his doors directly. Nor was he reſtrained, till it was hinted to him, that that was no doubt my wiſh, and would anſwer all my perverſe views. But the reſult was, That my brother (having really, as my mother and aunt inſiſted, taken wrong meaſures with me) ſhould write again in a more *moderate* manner: for nobody elſe was permitted or cared to write to ſuch a *ready ſcribbler*. And, I having declared, that I would not receive any more of his letters, without command from a ſuperior authority, my mother was to give it *hers:* and accordingly has done ſo in the following lines, written on the ſuperſcription of his letter to me; which letter alſo follows; together with my reply.

'CLARY HARLOWE,

'RECEIVE and read this, with the 'temper that becomes your ſex, 'your character, your education, and 'your duty: and return an anſwer to 'it, directed to your brother.

'CHARLOTTE HARLOWE.'

'TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

'THURSDAY MORNING.

'ONCE more I write, although im-'periouſly prohibited by a younger 'ſiſter. Your mother will have me do 'ſo, that you may be deſtitute of all de-'fence, if you perſiſt in your *pervicacy*. 'Shall I be a pedant, Miſs, for this 'word? She is willing to indulge in 'you the *leaſt* appearance of that deli-'cacy for which ſhe once, as well as 'every-body elſe, admired you—be-'fore you knew Lovelace; I cannot, 'however, help ſaying *that:* and ſhe, 'and your aunt Hervey, will have it—'[They would fain favour you, if they 'could] that I may have provoked from 'you the anſwer they nevertheleſs own 'to be ſo exceedingly *unbecoming*. I 'am now learning, you ſee, to take up 'the ſofter language, where you have 'laid it down. This then is the caſe.

'They *entreat*, they *pray*, they *beg*, 'they *ſupplicate*, [Will either of theſe 'do, Miſs Clary?] That you will make 'no ſcruple to go to your uncle An-'tony's: and fairly I am to tell you, for 'the very purpoſe mentioned in my 'laſt—or, it is preſumable, they need 'not *entreat*, *beg*, *pray*, *ſupplicate*. 'Thus much is promiſed to Mr. Solmes, 'who is your advocate, and very un-'eaſy that you ſhould be under con-'ſtraint, ſuppoſing that your diſlike to 'him ariſes from that. And, if he finds 'that you are not to be moved in his 'favour, when you are abſolutely freed 'from what you call a *controul*, he will 'forbear thinking of you, whatever it 'coſts him. He loves you too well: 'and in *this*, I really think, his under-'ſtanding, which you have reflected up-'on, is to be queſtioned.

'Only for one fortnight, therefore, 'permit his viſits. Your *education* [you 'tell me of *mine*, you know] ought to 'make you incapable of rudeneſs to 'any-body. He will not, I hope, be 'the firſt man, myſelf excepted, whom 'you ever treated rudely, purely be-'cauſe he is eſteemed by us all. I am, 'what you have a mind to make me, 'friend, brother, or ſervant—I wiſh I 'could be ſtill *more* polite, to ſo polite, 'ſo delicate, a ſiſter.

'JA. HARLOWE.

'You muſt ſtill write to *me*, if you 'condeſcend to reply. Your mo-'ther will not be permitted to be 'diſturbed with your nothing-'meaning vocatives!—*Vocatives*, 'once more, Madam Clary, repeats 'the *pedant* your brother!'

'TO JAMES HARLOWE, JUNIOR, ESQ.

'THURSDAY, MARCH 23.

'PERMIT me, my ever-dear and 'honoured papa and mamma, in 'this manner to ſurprize you into an 'audience, (preſuming this will be read 'to you) ſince I am denied the honour

'of writing to you directly. Let me 'beg of you to believe, that nothing 'but the most unconquerable dislike 'could make me stand against your 'pleasure. What are riches, what are 'settlements, to happiness? Let me not 'thus cruelly be given up to a man my 'very soul is averse to. Permit me to 'repeat, that I cannot *honestly* be his. 'Had I a slighter notion of the matri-'monial duty than I have, perhaps I 'might. But when I am to bear all 'the misery, and that for *life*; when my '*heart* is less concerned in this matter, 'than my *soul*; my *temporary*, perhaps, 'than my *future* good; why should I 'be denied the liberty of *refusing?* That 'liberty is all I ask.

'It were easy for me to give way to 'hear Mr. Solmes talk for the men-'tioned fortnight, although it is im-'possible for me, say what he would, 'to get over my dislike to him. But 'the moated-house, the chapel there, 'and the little mercy my brother and 'sister, who are to be there, have hi-'therto shewn me, are what I am ex-'tremely apprehensive of. And why 'does my brother say, my restraint is 'to be taken off, (and that too at Mr. 'Solmes's desire) when I am to be a still 'closer prisoner than before; the bridge 'threatened to be drawn up; and no 'dear papa and mamma near me, to 'appeal to, in the last resort?

'Transfer not, I beseech you, to a 'brother and sister your own authority 'over your child.—To a brother and 'sister, who treat me with unkindness 'and reproach; and, as I have too much 'reason to apprehend, misrepresent my 'words and behaviour; or, greatly fa-'voured as I used to be, it is impossible 'I should be sunk so low in your opi-'nions, as I unhappily am!

'Let but this my hard, my disgrace-'ful confinement be put an end to. 'Permit me, my dear mamma, to pur-'sue my needleworks in your presence, 'as one of your maidens; and you shall 'be witness, that it is not either wil-'fulness or prepossession that governs 'me. Let me not, however, be put out 'of your own house. Let Mr. Solmes 'come and go, as my papa pleases: let 'me but stay or retire when he comes, 'as I can; and leave the rest to Provi-'dence.

'Forgive me, brother, that thus, with 'an appearance of art, I address my-'self to my father and mother, to whom 'I am forbidden to approach, or to 'write. Hard it is to be reduced to such 'a contrivance! Forgive likewise the 'plain dealing I have used in the above, 'with the nobleness of a gentleman, 'and the gentleness due from a brother 'to a sister. Although of late you have 'given me but little room to hope either 'for your favour or compassion; yet, 'having not deserved to forfeit *either*, 'I presume to claim *both*; for I am 'confident it is at present much in your 'power, although but my brother, (my 'honoured parents both, I bless God, 'in being) to give peace to the greatly 'disturbed mind of *your unhappy sister*,

'CL. HARLOWE.'

Betty tells me, my brother has taken my letter all in pieces; and has under-taken to write such an answer to it, as shall confirm the *wavering*—So, it is plain, that I should have moved some-body by it, but for this hard-hearted brother—God forgive him!

LETTER VII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

THURSDAY NIGHT, MARCH 23.

I Send you the boasted confutation-letter, just now put into my hands —My brother and sister, my uncle Antony and Mr. Solmes, are, I under-stand, exulting over the copy of it be-low, as an unanswerable performance.

'TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

'ONCE again, my inflexible sister, 'I write to you. It is to let you 'know, that the pretty piece of art 'you found out to make me the ve-'hicle of your whining patheticks to 'your father and mother, has not had 'the expected effect.

'I do assure you, that your beha-'viour has not been misrepresented— 'Nor need it. Your mother, who is 'solicitous to take all opportunities of 'putting the most favourable con-'structions upon all you do, has been 'forced, as you well know, to give 'you up, upon full trial: no need then

'of

of the expedient of purſuing your needleworks in her ſight. She cannot bear your whining pranks: and it is for *her* ſake, that you are not permitted to come into her preſence —Nor will be, but upon her own terms.

'You had like to have made a ſimpleton of your aunt Hervey yeſterday: ſhe came down from you, pleading in your favour; but when ſhe was aſked, What conceſſion ſhe had brought you to? ſhe looked about her, and knew not what to anſwer. So your mother, when ſurprized into the beginning of your cunning addreſs to her and to your father, under my name, (for I had begun to read it, little ſuſpecting ſuch an *ingenious* ſubterfuge) and would then make me read it through, wrung her hands, Oh! her dear child, her dear child, muſt not be ſo compelled!—But when ſhe was aſked, Whether ſhe would be willing to have for her ſon-in-law the man who bids defiance to her whole family; and who had like to have murdered her ſon? And what conceſſions ſhe had gained from her dear child to merit this tenderneſs? And that for one who had apparently deceived her, in aſſuring her that her heart *was free?*—Then could ſhe look about her, as her ſiſter had done before: then was ſhe again brought to herſelf, and to a reſolution to aſſert her authority [not to *transfer* it, witty preſumer!] over the rebel who of late has ſo ingratefully ſtruggled to throw it off.

'You ſeem, child, to have a high notion of the matrimonial duty; and I'll warrant, like the reſt of your ſex, (one or two, whom I have the honour to know, excepted) that you will go to church to promiſe what you will never think of afterwards. But, *ſweet* child! as your *worthy* mamma Norton calls you, think a little leſs of the *matrimonial* (at leaſt till you come into that ſtate) and a little more of the *filial* duty.

'How can you ſay, you are to bear *all the miſery*, when you give ſo large a ſhare of it to your parents, to your uncles, to your aunt, to myſelf, and to your ſiſter; who all, for eighteen years of your life, loved you ſo well?

'If of late I have not given you room to hope for my favour or compaſſion, it is becauſe of late you have not deſerved either. I know what you mean, little reflecting fool, by ſaying, it is much in my power, although *but* your brother, (a very ſlight degree of relationſhip with you) to give you that peace which you can give yourſelf whenever you pleaſe.

'The liberty of *refuſing*, pretty Miſs, is denied you, becauſe we are all ſenſible, that the liberty of *chuſing*, to every-one's diſlike, muſt follow. The vile wretch you have ſet your heart upon ſpeaks this plainly to every-body, though you won't. He ſays you are *his*, and ſhall be *his*, and he will be the death of any man who robs him of his PROPERTY. So, Miſs, we have a mind to try this point with him. My father, ſuppoſing he has the right of a father in his child, is abſolutely determined not to be bullied out of that right. And what muſt that child be, who prefers the rake to a father?

'This is the light in which this whole debate ought to be taken. Bluſh, then, Delicacy, that cannot bear the poet's *amor omnibus idem!*—Bluſh, then, Purity! Be aſhamed, Virgin Modeſty! And, if capable of conviction, ſurrender your whole will to the will of the honoured pair, to whom you owe your being: and beg of all your friends to forgive and forget the part you have of late acted.

'I have written a longer letter than ever I deſigned to write to you, after the inſolent treatment and prohibition you have given me: and now I am commiſſioned to tell you, that your friends are as weary of confining you, as you are of being confined. And therefore you muſt prepare yourſelf to go in a very few days, as you have been told before, to your uncle Antony's; who, notwithſtanding your apprehenſions, will draw up his bridge when he pleaſes; will ſee what company he pleaſes, in his own houſe; nor will he demoliſh his chapel to cure you of your fooliſh late-commenced antipathy to a place of divine worſhip.—The more fooliſh, as, if we intended to uſe force, we could have the ceremony paſs in your chamber, as well as any-where elſe.

'Prejudice againſt Mr. Solmes has evidently blinded you, and there is a *charitable* neceſſity to open your eyes: ſince no one but you thinks the gentleman ſo contemptible in his *perſon*;

'nor,

'nor, for a plain country gentleman, 'who has too much solid sense to appear like a coxcomb, justly blameable in his *manners*.—And as to his 'temper, it is necessary you should 'speak upon fuller knowledge, than 'at present it is plain you can have of 'him.

'Upon the whole, it will not be 'amiss, that you prepare for your 'speedy removal, as well for the sake 'of your own conveniency, as to shew 'your readiness, in *one* point, at least, 'to oblige your friends; one of whom 'you may, if you please to deserve it, 'reckon, though *but* a brother,

'JAMES HARLOWE.'

'*P. S.* If you are disposed to see Mr. 'Solmes, and to make some excuses 'to him for your past conduct, in 'order to be able to meet him *somewhere else* with the less concern to 'yourself for your freedoms with 'him; he shall attend you where 'you please.

'If you have a mind to read the settlements, before they are read to you 'for your signing, they shall be sent 'you up—Who knows, but they 'will help you to some fresh objections?—Your heart is *free*, you 'know—It *must*—For, did you not 'tell your mother it was? And will 'the *pious* Clarissa fib to her mamma?

'I desire no reply. The case requires 'none. Yet I will ask you, Have 'you, Miss, no more proposals to 'make?'

I was so vexed when I came to the end of this letter, (the postscript to which, perhaps, might be written after the others had seen the letter) that I took up my pen, with an intent to write to my uncle Harlowe about resuming my own estate, in pursuance of your advice: but my heart failed me, when I recollected, that I had not one friend to stand by or support me in my claim; and that it would but the more incense them, without answering any good end. O that my cousin were but come!

Is it not a sad thing, beloved as I thought myself so lately by every-one, that now I have not one person in the world to plead for me, to stand by me, or who would afford me refuge, were I to be under the necessity of seeking for it!—I who had the vanity to think I had as many friends as I saw faces, and flattered myself too, that it was not altogether unmerited, because I saw not my Maker's image, either in man, woman, or child, high or low, rich or poor, whom, comparatively, I loved not as myself—Would to Heaven, my dear, that you were married! Perhaps, then, you could have induced Mr. Hickman to afford me protection, till these storms were over-blown. But then this might have involved *him* in difficulties and dangers; and that I would not have done for the world.

I don't know what to do, not I!—God forgive me, but I am very impatient! I wish—but I don't know what to wish, without a sin!—Yet I wish it would please God to take me to his mercy!—I can meet with none here—What a world is this! What is there in it desirable? The good we hope for, so strangely mixed, that one knows not what to wish for! And one half of mankind tormenting the other, and being tormented themselves in tormenting!—For here in this my particular case, my relations cannot be happy, though they make me unhappy!—Except my brother and sister, indeed—and they seem to take delight in and enjoy the mischief they make.

But it is time to lay down my pen, since my ink runs nothing but gall.

LETTER VIII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

FRIDAY MORNING, SIX O'CLOCK.

MRS. Betty tells me, there is now nothing talked of but of my going to my uncle Antony's. She has been ordered, she says, to get ready to attend me thither: and, upon my expressing my averseness to go, had the confidence to say, That having heard me often praise the *romanticknes* of the place, she was astonished (her hands and eyes lifted up) that I should set myself against going to a house so much in *my taste*.

I asked, if this was her own insolence, or her young mistress's observation?

She

Plate XVII. Published as the Act directs, by Harrison & Co. April 10. 1784.

She half-astonished *me* by her answer; That it was hard she could not say a *good* thing, without being robbed of the merit of it.

As the wench looked as if she really thought she had said a good thing, without knowing the boldness of it, I let it pass. But, to say the truth, this creature has surprized me on many occasions with her smartness: for, since she has been employed in this controuling office, I have discovered a great deal of wit in her assurance, which I never suspected before. This shews, that insolence is her talent; and that Fortune, in placing her as a servant to my sister, had not done so kindly by her as Nature; for that she would make a better figure as her *companion*. And indeed I can't help thinking sometimes, that I myself was better fitted by *Nature* to be the servant of *both*, than the *mistress* of the *one*, or the *servant* of the *other*. And within these few months past, *Fortune* has acted by me, as if she were of the same mind.

FRIDAY, TEN O'CLOCK.

GOING down to my poultry-yard, just now, I heard my brother and sister and that Solmes laughing and triumphing together. The high yew-hedge between us, which divides the yard from the garden, hindered them from seeing me.

My brother, as I found, had been reading part, or the whole perhaps, of the copy of his last letter—Mighty prudent and consistent, you'll say, with their views to make me the wife of a man from whom they conceal not what, were I to be such, it would be kind in them to endeavour to conceal, out of regard to my future peace!—But I have no doubt, that they hate me heartily.

'Indeed you was up with her there, 'brother,' said my sister. 'You need 'not have bid her not write to you. 'I'll engage, with all her wit, she'll 'never pretend to answer it.'

'Why, indeed,' said my brother, with an air of college-sufficiency, with which he abounds, (for he thinks nobody writes like himself) 'I believe I 'have given her a *choak-pear*.—What 'say you, Mr. Solmes?'

'Why, Sir,' said he, 'I think it is 'unanswerable. But will it not ex-'asperate her more against me?'

'Never fear, Mr. Solmes,' said my brother, 'but we'll carry our point, if 'she do not tire *you* out first. We have 'gone too far in this method to recede. 'Her cousin Morden will soon be here: 'so all must be over before that time, 'or she'll be made independent of us 'all.'

There, Miss Howe, is the reason given for their Jehu-driving!

Mr. Solmes declared, that he was determined to persevere while my brother gave him any hopes, and while my father stood firm.

My sister told my brother, that he *bit me charmingly* on the reason why I ought to converse with Mr. Solmes; but that he should not be so smart upon the *sex*, for the faults of *this perverse girl*.

Some lively, and I suppose, witty answer, my brother returned; for he and Mr. Solmes laughed outrageously upon it, and Bella, laughing too, called him a naughty man: but I heard no more of what they said; they walked on into the garden.

If you think, my dear, that what I have related did not again fire me, you will find yourself mistaken when you read at this place the inclosed copy of my letter to my brother; struck off—while the iron was red-hot.

No more call me meek and gentle, I beseech you.

'TO MR. JAMES HARLOWE.

'FRIDAY MORNING.

'SIR,

'IF, notwithstanding your prohibi-'tion, I should be silent, on oc-'casion of your last, you would, per-'haps conclude, that I was consenting 'to go to my uncle Antony's upon the 'condition you mention. My father 'must do as he pleases with his child. 'He may turn me out of his doors, if he 'thinks fit, or give *you* leave to do it; 'but (loth as I am to say it) I should 'think it very hard to be carried by 'force to any-body's house when I have 'one of *my own* to go to.

'Far be it from me, notwithstanding 'yours and my sister's provocations, to 'think of taking my estate into my 'own hands, without my father's leave: 'but why, if I must not stay any 'longer here, may I not be permitted 'to go thither: I will engage to see

'nobody

'nobody they would not have me see, 'if this favour be permitted. *Favour* 'I call it, and am ready to receive and 'and acknowledge it as such, although 'my grandfather's will has made it 'matter of right.

'You ask me, in a very unbrotherly 'manner, in the postscript to your let- 'ter, if I have not some new proposals 'to make? I HAVE (since you put the 'question) three or four; *new ones* all, 'I think; though I will be bold to say, 'that, submitting the case to any one 'person whom *you* have not set against 'me, my *old* ones ought not to have 'been rejected. I *think* this; why then 'should I not *write* it?—Nor have you 'any more reason to storm at your '*sister* for telling it you, (since you seem 'in your letter to make it your boast 'how you turned my mother and my 'aunt Hervey against me) than I have 'to be angry with my *brother*, for 'treating me as no brother ought to 'treat a sister.

'These, then, are my new proposals.

'That, as above, I may not be hin- 'dered from going to reside (under 'such conditions as shall be prescribed 'to me, which I will most religiously 'observe) at my grandfather's late 'house. I will not again in this place 'call it *mine*. I have reason to think 'it a great misfortune, that ever it was 'so—*Indeed* I have.

'If this be not permitted, I desire 'leave to go for a month, or for what 'time shall be thought fit, to Miss 'Howe's. I dare say her mother will 'consent to it, if I have my father's 'permission to go.

'If this, neither, be allowed, and 'I am to be turned out of my father's 'house, I beg I may be suffered to go to 'my aunt Hervey's, where I will in- 'violably observe her commands, and 'those of my father and mother.

'But if this, neither, is to be grant- 'ed, it is my humble request, that I 'may be sent to my uncle Harlowe's, 'instead of my uncle Antony's. I 'mean not by this any disrespect to my 'uncle Antony; but his moat, with 'his bridge threatened to be drawn up, 'and perhaps the chapel there, terrify 'me beyond expression, notwithstand- 'ing your *witty* ridicule upon me for 'that apprehension.

'If this likewise be refused, and if 'I *must* be carried to the moated-house, 'which used to be a delightful one to 'me, let it be promised me, that I shall 'not be compelled to receive Mr. 'Solmes's visits there; and then I will 'as chearfully go, as ever I did.

'So here, Sir, are my new proposals. 'And if none of them answer your 'end, as each of them tends to the ex- 'clusion of that ungenerous *persister's* 'visits, be pleased to know, that there 'is no misfortune I will not submit to, 'rather than yield to give my hand to 'the man to whom I can allow no 'share in my heart.

'If I write in a stile different from 'my usual, and different from what I 'wished to have occasion to write, an 'impartial person, who knew what I 'have accidentally within this hour 'past, heard from your mouth, and 'my sister's, and a third person's, (par- 'ticularly the reason you give for 'driving on at this violent rate; to wit, 'my cousin Morden's soon-expected 'arrival) would think I have but too 'much reason for it. Then be pleased 'to remember, Sir, that when my '*whining vocatives* have subjected me 'to so much scorn and ridicule, it is 'time, were it but to *imitate* examples 'so excellent as *you* and my *sister* set 'me, that I should endeavour to assert 'my character, in order to be thought '*less an alien*, and *nearer of kin to you* '*both*, than either of you have of late 'seemed to suppose me.

'Give me leave, in order to *empty* '*my female quiver* at once, to add, that 'I know no other reason which you 'can have for forbidding me to reply 'to you, after you have written what 'you pleased to me, than that you are 'conscious you cannot answer to rea- 'son and to justice the treatment you 'give me.

'If it be otherwise, I, an unlearned, 'un-logical girl, younger by near a 'third than yourself, will venture (so 'assured am I of the justice of my 'cause) to put my fate upon an issue 'with *you*: with *you*, Sir, who have 'had the advantage of an academi- 'cal education; whose mind must have 'been strengthened by observation, 'and learned conversation, and who, 'pardon my going so *low*, have been 'accustomed to give *cheek-pears* to 'those you vouchsafe to write against.

'Any impartial person, your late 'tutor, for instance, or the pious and

'worthy

'worthy Dr. Lewen, may be judge between us: and if either give it against me, I will promise to resign to my destiny; provided, if it be given against you, that my father will be pleased only to allow of my negative to the person so violently sought to be imposed upon me.

'I flatter myself, brother, that you will the readier come into this proposal, as you seem to have a *high* opinion of your talents for argumentation; and not a *low* one of the cogency of the arguments contained in your last letter. And as I can possibly have no advantage in a contention with you, if the justice of my cause affords me not any; (as you have no opinion it will) it behoves you, methinks, to shew to an impartial moderator, that *I* am wrong, and *you* not so.

'If this be accepted, there is a necessity for it's being carried on by the pen; the facts to be stated, and agreed upon by both; and the decision to be given, according to the force of the arguments each shall produce in support of their side of the question: for, give me leave to say, I know too well the *manliness* of your temper, to offer at a *personal* debate with you.

'If it be not accepted, I shall conclude, that you cannot defend your conduct towards me; and shall only beg of you, that, for the future, you will treat me with the respect due to a sister from a brother who would be thought as polite as learned.

'And now, Sir, if I have seemed to shew some spirit, not quite foreign to the relation I have the honour to bear to *you*, and to my *sister*; and which may be deemed not altogether of a piece with that part of my character which once, it seems, gained me every-one's love; be pleased to consider to *whom*, and to *what* it is owing; and that this part of that character was not dispensed with, till it subjected me to that scorn, and to those insults, which a brother, who has been *so tenacious of an independence voluntarily* given up by me, and who has appeared *so exalted* upon it, ought not to have shewn to *anybody*, much less to a *weak* and *defenceless* sister: who is, notwithstanding, an affectionate and respectful one, and would be glad to shew herself to be so upon all future occasions; as she has in every action of her past life, although of late she has met with such unkind returns.

'CL. HARLOWE.'

See, my dear, the force, and volubility, as I may say, of passion; for the letter I send you is my first draught, struck off without a blot or erasure.

FRIDAY, THREE O'CLOCK.

As soon as I had transcribed it, I sent it down to my brother by Mrs. Betty.

The wench came up soon after, all aghast, with a 'Lzud, Miss! What 'have you done?—What *have* you 'written? For you have set them all in 'a *joyful* uproar!'

* *

My sister is but this moment gone from me: she came up all in a flame; which obliged me abruptly to lay down my pen. She ran to me—

'O spirit!' said she; tapping my neck a little *too* hard. 'And is it 'come to this at last!'

'Do you beat me, Bella?'

'Do you call this beating you? Only 'tapping your shoulder *thus*,' said she; tapping again more gently—'This is 'what we *expected* it would come to—'You want to be independent—My 'father has lived too long for you!'

I was going to speak with vehemence; but she put her handkerchief before my mouth, very rudely—'You have done 'enough with your pen, mean listener, 'as you are! But, *know*, that neither 'your independent scheme, nor any of 'your visiting ones, will be granted 'you. Take your course, perverse one! 'Call in your rake to help you to an '*independence* upon your parents, and 'a *dependence* upon him!—Do so!—'Prepare this moment—Resolve what 'you will take with you—To-morrow 'you go—Depend upon it to-morrow you go!—No longer shall you 'stay here, watching and creeping about 'to hearken to what people say—'Tis 'determined, child!—you go to-morrow—My brother would have come 'up to tell you so; but I persuaded him 'to the contrary—For I know not what 'had become of you, if he had—'Such a letter! such an insolent, such 'a *conceited* challenger!—O thou vain 'creature! But prepare yourself, I say

'—To-morrow you go—My brother 'will accept of your bold challenge; 'but it must be *personal*; and at my 'uncle Antony's—Or perhaps at Mr. 'Solmes's—'

Thus she ran on, almost foaming with passion, till quite out of patience, I said, 'No more of your violence, 'Bella—Had I known in what a way 'you designed to come up, you should 'not have found my chamber-door 'open.—Talk to your *servant* in this 'manner. Unlike *you*, as I bless God 'I am, I am nevertheless your sister— 'And let me tell you, that I won't go 'to-morrow, nor next day, nor next 'day to that—except I am dragged 'away by violence.'

'What! not if your father or your 'mother command it—*Girl?*' said she, intending another word, by her pause and manner before it came out.

'Let it come to *that*, Bella; then 'I shall know what to say. But it 'shall be from their own mouths, if I 'do—Not from yours, nor your Bet- 'ty's—And say another word to me, 'in this manner, and be the conse- 'quence what it may, I will force my- 'self into their presence; and demand 'what I have done to be used thus!'

'Come along, child! Come along, 'meekness!'—taking my hand and leading me towards the door—'Demand 'it of them now—You'll find both 'your despised parents together!— 'What! Does your heart fail you?' —for I resisted, being thus insolently offered to be led, and pulled my hand from her.

'I want not to be led,' said I; 'and 'since I can plead your invitation, I '*will* go:' and was posting to the stairs accordingly in my passion—But she got between me and the door, and shut it—

'Let me first, bold one,' said she, 'apprize them of your visit—For your 'own sake let me—For my brother is 'with them.' But yet opening it again, seeing me shrink back—'Go, if you 'will!—Why don't you go? Why 'don't you go, Miss?'—following me to my closet, whither I retired, with my heart full, and pulled the sash-door after me; and could no longer hold in my tears.

Nor would I answer one word to her repeated aggravations, nor to her demands upon me to open my door; (for the key was on the inside) nor so much as turn my head towards her, as she looked through the glass at me. And at last, which vexed her to the heart, I drew the silk curtain, that she should not see me, and down she went muttering all the way.

Is not this usage enough to provoke a rashness never before thought of?

As it is but too probable that I may be hurried away to my uncle's without being able to give you previous notice of it; I beg that as soon as you shall hear of such a violence, you would send to the usual place, to take back such of your letters as may not have reached my hands, or to fetch any of mine that may be there.

May you, my dear, be always happy, prays your

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

I have received your four letters. But am in such a ferment, that I cannot at present write to them.

LETTER IX.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

FRIDAY NIGHT, MARCH 24.

I Have a most provoking letter from my sister. I might have supposed, she would resent the contempt she brought upon herself in my chamber. Her conduct surely can only be accounted for by the rage instigated by a supposed rivalry.

TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

'I Am to tell you, that your mother 'has begged you off for the mor- 'row: but that you have effectually 'done your business with her, as well 'as with every-body else.

'In your proposals, and letter to 'your brother, you have shewn your- 'self so silly, and wise; so young, and 'so old; so gentle, and so obstinate; 'so meek, and so violent; that never 'was there so mixed a character.

'We all know *of whom* you have 'borrowed this new spirit. And yet 'the seeds of it must be in your heart, 'or it could not all at once shew itself 'so rampant. It would be doing Mr. 'Solmes a spite to wish him such a *sky*,

'*un sky*

'*sly* girl; another of your contradictory qualities—I leave you to make out what I mean by it.

'*Here*, Miss, your mother will not let you remain: she cannot have any peace of mind while such a rebel of a child is so near her; your aunt Hervey will not take a charge which all the family put together cannot manage; your uncle Harlowe will not see you at his house, till you are married—So, thanks to your own stubbornness, you have nobody that will receive you but your uncle Antony. Thither you must go in a very few days; and when there, your brother will settle with you in my presence, all that relates to your modest challenge:—for it is accepted, I assure you. Dr. Lewen will possibly be there, since you make choice of him. *Another* gentleman likewise, were it but to convince you, that he is another sort of man than you have taken him to be. Your two uncles will *possibly* be there too, to see that the *poor*, *weak*, and *defenceless* sister, has fair play. So, you see, Miss, what company your smart challenge will draw together.

'Prepare for the day. You'll soon be called upon. Adieu, mamma Norton's *sweet child!*

'ARAB. HARLOWE.'

I transcribed this letter, and sent it to my mother with these lines—

'A VERY FEW WORDS, MY EVER-HONOURED MAMMA!

'IF my sister wrote the inclosed by my father's direction, or yours, I must submit to the usage she gives me in it, with this *only* observation, That it is short of the personal treatment I have received from her. If it be of her own head—Why then, Madam—But I *know*, that when I was banished from your presence—Yet, till I know if she has or has not authority for this usage, I will only write further, that I am *your* very *unhappy child*,

'CL. HARLOWE.'

This answer I received in an open slip of paper; but it was wet in one place. I kissed the place; for I am sure it was blistered, as I may say, by a mother's tear!—She must (*I hope* she must) have written it reluctantly.

'TO apply for protection, where authority is defied, is bold. Your sister, who would not in *your* circumstances have been guilty of *your* perverseness, may allowably be angry at you for it. However, we have told her to moderate her *zeal* for our insulted authority. See, if you can deserve another behaviour, than that you complain of: which cannot, however, be so grievous to *you*, as the *cause* of it is to

'*Your* more *unhappy Mother*.

'*How often must I forbid you any address to me!*'

Give me, my dearest Miss Howe, your opinion, what I *can*, what I *ought* to do. Not what you would do (pushed as I am pushed) in *resentment* or *passion*—since, so instigated, you tell me, that you should have been with somebody before now—And steps taken in passion hardly ever fail of giving cause for repentance: but acquaint me with what you think cool judgment, and after reflection, whatever were to be the event, will justify.

I doubt not your *sympathizing* love: but yet you cannot possibly feel indignity and persecution so very sensibly as the immediate sufferer feels them—Are *fitter* therefore to advise me, than I am myself.

I will here rest my cause. Have I, or have I not, suffered or borne enough? And if they will still persevere; if that strange persister against an antipathy so strongly avowed, will *still* persist; say, what *can* I do?—What course pursue?—Shall I fly to London, and endeavour to hide myself from Lovelace, as well as from all my own relations, till my cousin Morden arrives? Or shall I embark for Leghorn in my way to my cousin? Yet, my sex, my youth, considered, how full of danger is this last measure!—And may not my cousin be set out for England, while I am getting thither?—What *can* I do?—Tell me, tell me, my dearest Miss Howe, [for I dare not trust myself] tell me, what I *can* do.

ELEVEN O'CLOCK AT NIGHT.

I HAVE been forced to try to compose my angry passions at my harpsichord; having first shut close my doors and windows, that I might not be heard below. As I was closing the shutters of the windows, the distant whooting of the bird of Minerva, as from the often-visited Wood House, gave the subject in that charming ODE to WISDOM, which does honour to our sex, as it was written by one of it. I made an essay, a week ago, to set the three last stanzas of it, as not unsuitable to my unhappy situation; and after I had re-perused the ode, those were my lesson: and, I am sure, in the solemn address they contain to the All-wise and All-powerful Deity, my heart went with my fingers.

I inclose the ode, and my effort with it. The subject is solemn: my circumstances are affecting; and I flatter myself, that I have not been quite unhappy in the performance. If it obtain your approbation, I shall be out of doubt: and should be still more assured, could I hear it tried by *your* voice and finger.

ODE TO WISDOM. BY A LADY.

I.

'THE solitary bird of night
'Through the thick shades now wings his flight,
'And quits his time-shook tower;
'Where sheltered from the blaze of day,
'In philosophick gloom he lay,
'Beneath his ivy-bower.

II.

'With joy I hear the solemn sound,
'Which midnight echoes waft around,
'And sighing gales repeat.
'Fav'rite of Pallas! I attend,
'And, faithful to thy summons, bend
'At Wisdom's awful seat.

III.

'She loves the cool, the silent eve,
'Where no false shews of life deceive,
'Beneath the lunar ray.
'Here folly drops each vain disguise;
'Nor sport her gaily colour'd dyes,
'As in the beam of day.

IV.

'O Pallas! queen of ev'ry art
'That glads the sense and mends the heart,
'Blest source of purer joys!
'In ev'ry form of beauty bright,
'That captivates the *mental* sight
'With pleasure and surprize;

V.

'To thy unspotted shrine I bow:
'Attend thy modest suppliant's vow,
'That breathes no wild desires;
'But, taught by thy unerring rules,
'To shun the fruitless wish of fools,
'To nobler views aspires.

VI.

'Not Fortune's gem, Ambition's plume,
'Nor Cytherea's fading bloom,
'Be objects of my prayer:
'Let *av'rice*, *vanity*, and *pride*,
'Those envy'd glitt'ring toys divide,
'The dull rewards of care.

VII.

'To *me* thy *better* gifts impart,
'Each moral beauty of the heart,
'By studious thought refin'd;
'For Wealth, the smiles of glad content;
'For Power, it's amplest, best extent,
'An empire o'er my mind.

VIII.

'When *Fortune* drops her gay parade,
'When *Pleasure's* transient roses fade,
'And wither in the tomb,
'Unchang'd is thy immortal prize;
'Thy ever-verdant laurels rise
'In undecaying bloom.

IX.

'By *thee* protected, I defy
'The coxcomb's sneer, the stupid lye
'Of ignorance and spite:
'Alike contemn the leaden fool,
'And all the pointed ridicule
'Of undiscerning *wit*.

X.

'From envy, hurry, noise, and strife,
'The dull impertinence of life,
'In *thy* retreat I rest:
'Pursue thee to the peaceful groves,
'Where Plato's sacred spirit roves,
'In all thy beauties dreft.

XI.

'He bade Ilyssus' tuneful stream
'Convey thy philosophick theme
'Of PERFECT, FAIR, and GOOD:
'Attentive Athens caught the sound;
'And all her list'ning sons around
'In awful silence stood:

XII.

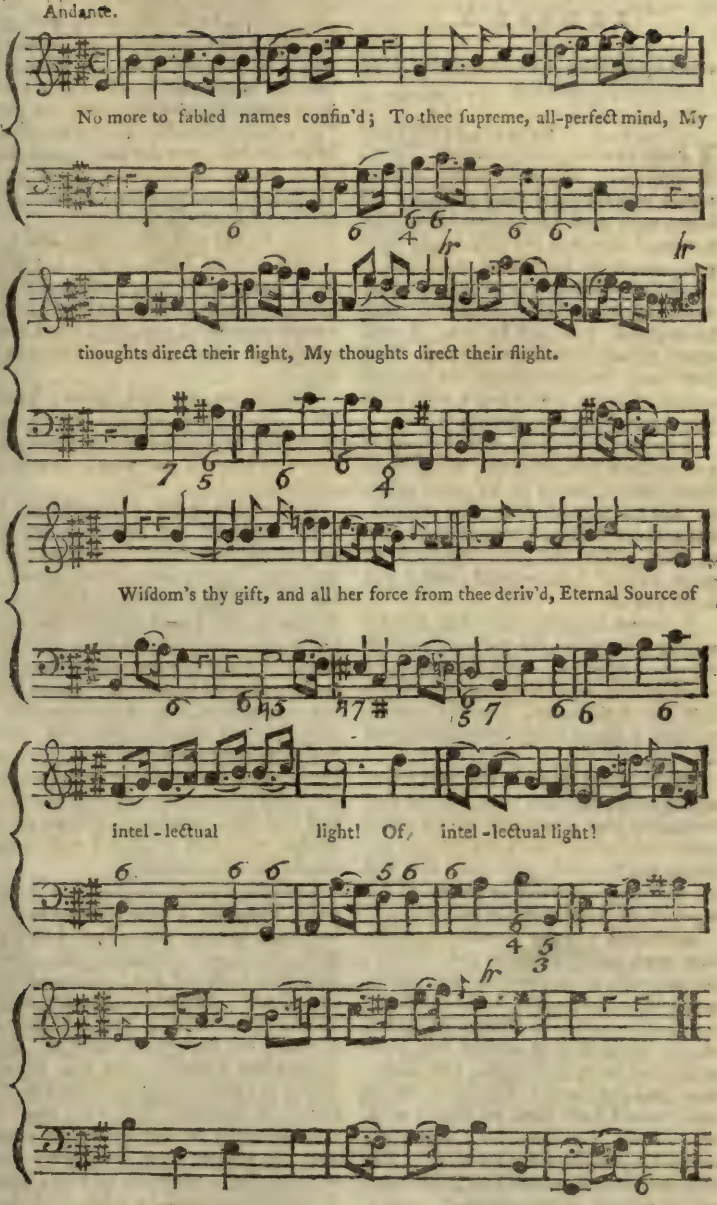
'Reclaim'd her wild licentious youth,
'Confess'd the potent voice of Truth,
'And felt it's just controul.
'The *Passions* ceas'd their loud alarms,
'And *Virtue's* soft persuasive charms
'O'er all their senses stole.

XIII.

'*Thy* breath inspires the POET'S song,
'The PATRIOT'S free, unbiass'd tongue,
'The HERO'S gen'rous strife;
'*Thine* are RETIREMENT'S silent joys,
'And all the sweet engaging ties
'Of STILL, DOMESTICK life.'

XIV. No

XIV.



XV.

'O ſend her ſure, her ſteady ray,
'To regulate my doubtful way
'Thro' life's perplexing road:
'The miſts of error to controul,
'And thro' it's gloom direct my ſoul
'To happineſs and good.

XVI.

'Beneath her clear diſcerning eye
'The viſionary ſhadows fly
'Of Folly's painted ſhow.
'She ſees thro' ev'ry fair diſguiſe,
'That all but VIRTUE's ſolid joys
'Is vanity and woe.'

LETTER

LETTER X.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

FRIDAY, MIDNIGHT.

I Have now a calmer moment. Envy, ambition, high and selfish resentment, and all the violent passions, are now, most probably, asleep all around me; and shall not my own angry ones give way to the silent hour, and subside likewise?—They *have* given way to it; and I have made use of the gentler space to re-peruse your last letters. I will touch upon some passages in them. And that I may the less endanger the but just recovered calm, I will begin with what you write about Mr. Hickman.

Give me leave to say, that I am sorry you cannot yet persuade yourself to think better, that is to say, *more justly*, of that gentleman, than your whimsical picture of him shews you do; or, at least, than the humorousness of your natural vein would make one *think* you do.

I do not imagine, that *you yourself* will say, he sat for the picture you have drawn. And yet, upon the whole, it is not greatly to his disadvantage. Were I at ease in my mind, I would venture to draw a much more amiable and just likeness.

If Mr. Hickman has not that assurance which some men have, he has that humanity and gentleness which many want: and which, with the infinite value he has for you, will make him one of the fittest husbands in the world for a person of your vivacity and spirit.

Although you say I would not like him myself, I do assure you, if Mr. Solmes were such a man as Mr. Hickman, in person, mind, and behaviour, my friends and I had never disagreed about him, if they would not have permitted me to live single; Mr. Lovelace (having such a character as he has) would have stood no chance with me. This I can the more boldly aver, because I plainly perceive, that of the two passions, *love* and *fear*, this man will be able to inspire one with a much greater proportion of the *latter*, than I imagine is compatible with the *former*, to make a happy marriage.

I am glad you own, that you like no one better than Mr. Hickman. In a little while, I make no doubt, you will be able, if you challenge your heart upon it, to acknowledge, that you like not any man so well: especially, when you come to consider, that the very faults you find in Mr. Hickman, admirably fit him to make *you* happy; that is to say, if it be necessary to your happiness, that you should have *your own will in every thing*.

But let me add one thing: and that is this.—You have such a sprightly turn, that, with your admirable talents, you would make any man in the world, who loved you, look like a fool, except he were such a one as Lovelace.

Forgive me, my dear, for my frankness: and forgive me also, for so soon returning to subjects so immediately relative to myself, as those I now must touch upon.

You again insist (strengthened by Mr. Lovelace's opinion) upon my *assuming* my own estate: [I cannot call it *resuming*, having never been in possession of it] and I have given you room to expect, that I will consider this subject more closely than I have done before.—I must however own, that the reasons which I had to offer against taking your advice, were so obvious, that I thought you would have seen them yourself, and been determined by them, against your own haftier counsel.—But since this has not been so, and that both you and Mr. Lovelace call upon me to assume my own estate, I will enter briefly into the subject.

In the first place, let me ask you, my dear, supposing I were *inclined* to follow your advice, whom have I to support me in my demand? My uncle Harlowe is one of my trustees—He is against me. My cousin Morden is the other—He is in Italy, and very probably may be set against me too. My brother has declared, that they are resolved to carry their point before he arrives: so that, as they drive on, all will probably be decided before I can have an answer from him, were I to write. And, confined as I am, were the answer to come in time, and they did not like it, they would keep it from me.

In the next place, parents have great advantages in every eye over the child;

it

if ſhe diſpute their pleaſure in the diſpoſing of her: and ſo they ought; ſince out of *twenty* inſtances, perhaps *two* could not be produced, when *they* were not in the right, the *child* in the wrong.

You would not, I am ſure, have me accept of Mr. Lovelace's offered aſſiſtance in ſuch a claim. If I would embrace any *other* perſon's, who elſe would care to appear for a child againſt parents, ever, till of late, ſo affectionate?—But were ſuch a protector to be found, what a length of time would it take up in a courſe of litigation? The will and the deeds have flaws in them, they ſay. My brother ſometimes talks of going to reſide at *the Grove*: I ſuppoſe, with a deſign to make ejectments neceſſary, were I to offer at aſſuming; or, were I to marry Mr. Lovelace, in order to give him all the oppoſition and difficulty the law would help him to give.

Theſe caſes I have put to myſelf, for argument-ſake: but they are all out of the queſtion, although any-body *were* to be found who would eſpouſe my cauſe: for I do aſſure you, I would ſooner beg my bread, than litigate for my right with my father; ſince I am convinced, that whether the parent do his duty by the child or not, the child cannot be excuſed from doing hers to him. And to go to law with my *father*, what a ſound has that? You will ſee, that I have mentioned my wiſh (as an alternative, and as a favour) to be permitted, if I *muſt* be put out of his houſe, to go thither: but not one ſtep further can I go. And you ſee how this is reſented.

Upon the whole, then, what have I to hope for, but a change in my father's reſolution?—And is there any probability of *that*; ſuch an aſcendency as my brother and ſiſter have obtained over every-body; and ſuch an intereſt to purſue the enmity they have now openly avowed againſt me?

As to Mr. Lovelace's approbation of your aſſumption-ſcheme, I wonder not at. He very probably penetrates the difficulties I ſhould have to bring it to effect, without *his* aſſiſtance. Were I to find myſelf as free as I would wiſh myſelf to be, perhaps Mr. Lovelace would ſtand a worſe chance with me than his vanity may permit him to imagine; notwithſtanding the pleaſure you take in raillying me on his account. How know you, but all that appears to be ſpecious and reaſonable in his offers; ſuch as, ſtanding his chance for my favour, after I became *independent*, as I may call it; [by which I mean no more, than to have the liberty of refuſing for my huſband a man whom it hurts me but to think of in that light] and ſuch as his not viſiting me but by my leave; and till Mr. Morden come; and till I am ſatisfied of his reformation—How know you, I ſay, that he gives not himſelf theſe airs purely to ſtand better in *your* graces as well as *mine*, by offering of his own accord conditions which he muſt needs think would be inſiſted on, were the caſe to happen?

Then am I utterly diſpleaſed with him. To threaten as he threatens; yet to pretend, that it is not to intimidate me; and to beg of you *not to tell me*, when he muſt know you *would*, and no doubt *intended* that you *ſhould*, is ſo meanly artful!—The man muſt think he has a frighted fool to deal with.—I, to join hands with ſuch a man of violence! my own brother the man whom he threatens!—And what has Mr. Solmes done to him?—Is *he* to be blamed, if he thinks a perſon would make a wife worth having, to endeavour to obtain her?—O that my friends would but leave me to my own way in this one point! For have I given the man encouragement ſufficient to ground theſe threats upon? Were Mr. Solmes a man to whom I could be but *indifferent*, it might be found, that to have the merit of a *ſufferer* given him from ſuch a flaming ſpirit, would very little anſwer the views of that ſpirit. It is my fortune to be treated as a fool by my brother: but Mr. Lovelace ſhall find—Yet I will let *him* know my mind; and then it will come with a better grace to your knowledge.

Mean time, give me leave to tell you, that it goes againſt me, in my cooler moments, unnatural as my brother is to me, to have you, my dear, who are my other ſelf, write ſuch very ſevere reflections upon him, in relation to the advantage Lovelace had over him. He is not indeed *your* brother: but remember, that you write to *his* ſiſter.—Upon my word, my dear Miſs Howe, you dip your pen in gall whenever you

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are offended: and I am almoſt ready to queſtion, when I read ſome of your expreſſions againſt *others* of my relations as well as him, (although *in my favour*) whether you are ſo thoroughly warranted by *your own* patience, as you think yourſelf, to call other people to account for *their* warmth. Should we not be particularly careful to keep clear of the faults we cenſure?—And yet I am ſo angry both at my brother and ſiſter, that I ſhould not have taken this liberty with my dear friend, notwithſtanding I know you *never* loved them, had you not made ſo light of ſo ſhocking a tranſaction, where a brother's life was at ſtake: when his credit in the eye of the miſchievous ſex has received a ſtill deeper wound than he *perſonally* ſuſtained; and when a revival of the ſame wicked reſentments (which may end more fatally) is threatened.

His credit, I ſay, in the eye of the *miſchievous ſex:* who is not warranted to call it ſo; when it is reckoned among the men ſuch an extraordinary piece of ſelf-conqueſt (as the two libertines his companions gloried) to reſolve never to give a challenge; and among whom duelling is ſo faſhionable a part of brutal bravery, that the man of *temper*, who is, moſtly, I believe, the *truly* brave man, is often at a loſs ſo to behave as to avoid incurring either a mortal guilt, or a general contempt?

To enlarge a little upon this ſubject, may we not infer, that thoſe who would be guilty of throwing theſe contempts upon a man of temper, who would rather paſs by a verbal injury, than to embrue his hands in blood, know not the meaſure of true magnanimity? nor how much nobler it is to *forgive*, and even how much more *manly* to *deſpiſe*, than to *reſent* an injury? Were I a man, methinks, I ſhould have too much ſcorn for a perſon, who could wilfully do me a mean wrong, to put a value upon *his* life, equal to what I put upon *my own*. What an abſurdity, becauſe a man had done me a *ſmall* injury, that I ſhould put it in his power (at leaſt, to an *equal* riſque) to do me, and thoſe who love me, an irreparable one?—Were it not a *wilful* injury, nor *avowed* to be ſo, there could not be *room* for reſentment.

How willingly would I run away from myſelf, and what moſt concerns myſelf, if I could! This digreſſion brings me back again to the occaſion of it—And that to the impatience I was in, when I ended my laſt letter, for my ſituation is not altered. I renew therefore my former earneſtneſs, as the new day approaches, and will bring with it perhaps new trials, that you will (as undiveſtedly as poſſible of favour or reſentment) tell me what you would have me do:—for, if I am obliged to go to my uncle Antony's, all, I doubt, will be over with me. Yet how to avoid it—That's the difficulty!

I ſhall depoſit this the firſt thing. When you have it, loſe no time, I pray you, to adviſe (leſt it be too late) *your ever-obliged*

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER XI.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

SATURDAY, MARCH 25.

WHAT *can* I adviſe you to do, my noble creature? Your merit is your crime. You can no more change *your* nature, than your perſecutors can *theirs*. Your diſtreſs is owing to the vaſt diſparity between you and them. What would you have of them? Do they not act in character?—And to whom? To an alien. You are not one of them. They have two dependencies in their hope to move you to compliance—Upon their *impenetrableneſs* one; [I'd give it a more proper name, if I dared] the other, on the regard you have always had for your *character*, [Have they not heretofore owned as much?] and upon your apprehenſions from *that* of Lovelace, which would diſcredit you, ſhould you take any ſtep by his means to extricate yourſelf. Then they know, that reſentment and unperſuadableneſs are not natural to you; and that the anger they have wrought you up to, will ſubſide, as all *extraordinaries* ſoon do; and that once married, you will make the beſt of it.

But ſurely your *father's* ſon and eldeſt daughter have a view (by communicating to ſo narrow a ſoul all they know of your juſt averſion to him) to entail

entail unhappineſs for life upon you, were you to have the man who is already more nearly related to them, than ever he can be to you, although the ſhocking compulſion ſhould take place.

As to that wretch's perſeverance, thoſe only, who know not the man, will wonder at it. He has not the leaſt delicacy. His principal view in marriage is not to the mind. How ſhall thoſe beauties be valued, which cannot be comprehended? Were you to be his, and ſhew a viſible want of tenderneſs to him, it is my opinion, he would not be much concerned at it. I have heard you well obſerve, from your Mrs. Norton, That a perſon who has any *overruling* paſſion, will compound by giving up twenty *ſecondary* or *under-ſatisfactions*, though more laudable ones, in order to have *that* gratified.

I'll give you the ſubſtance of a converſation [No fear you can be made to like him worſe than you do already] that paſſed between Sir Harry Downeton and this Solmes, but three days ago, as Sir Harry told it but yeſterday to my mother and me. It will confirm to you that what your ſiſter's inſolent Betty reported he ſhould ſay, of governing by *fear*, was not of her own head.

Sir Harry told him, he wondered he ſhould wiſh to obtain you ſo much againſt your inclination, as every-body knew it would be, if he did.

He mattered not that, he ſaid: coy maids made the fondeſt wives. [A ſorry fellow!] It would not at all grieve him to ſee a pretty woman make wry faces, if ſhe gave him cauſe to vex her. And your eſtate, by the convenience of it's ſituation, would richly pay him for all he could bear with your ſhyneſs.

He ſhould be ſure, he ſaid, after a while, of your complaiſance, if not of your love: and in that ſhould be happier than nine parts in ten of his married acquaintance.

What a wretch is this!

For the reſt, your known virtue would be as great a ſecurity to him, as he could wiſh for.

'She will look upon you,' ſaid Sir Harry, 'if ſhe be forced to marry you, 'as Elizabeth of France did upon Phi-'lip II. of Spain, when he received 'her on his frontiers as her huſband, 'who *was* to have been but her father-'in-law: that is, with fear and terror, 'rather than with complaiſance and 'love. And you will perhaps be as 'ſurly to her, as that old monarch was 'to *his* young bride.'

Fear and terror, the wretch, the horrid wretch, ſaid, looked pretty in a bride as well as in a wife: and, laughing, [Yes, my dear, the hideous fellow laughed immoderately, as Sir Harry told us, when he ſaid it] It ſhould be his care to perpetuate the occaſion for that *fear*, if he could not think he had the *love*. And, truly, he was of opinion, that if LOVE and FEAR muſt be ſeparated in matrimony, the man who made himſelf *feared*, fared beſt.

If my eyes would carry with them the execution which the eyes of the baſiliſk are ſaid to do, I would make it my firſt buſineſs to *ſee* this creature.

My mother, however, ſays, it would be a prodigious merit in you, if you could get over your averſion to him. 'Where,' aſks ſhe, [as you have been aſked before] 'is the praiſe-worthi-'neſs of obedience, if it be only paid 'in inſtances where we give up no-'thing?'

What a fatality, that you have no better an option—Either a *Scylla* or a *Charybdis*.

Were it not you, I ſhould know how (barbarouſly uſed as you are uſed) to adviſe you in a moment. But ſuch a noble character to ſuffer from a (ſuppoſed) raſhneſs and indiſcretion of ſuch a nature, would, as I have heretofore obſerved, be a wound to the ſex.

While I was in hope, that the aſſerting of your own independence would have helped you, I was pleaſed, that you had *one* reſource, as I thought: but now, that you have ſo well proved, that ſuch a ſtep would not avail you, I am entirely at a loſs what to ſay.

I will lay down my pen, and think.

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I HAVE conſidered, and conſidered again; but, I proteſt, I know no more what to ſay now, than before. Only this: that I am young, like yourſelf; and have a much weaker judgment, and ſtronger paſſions, than you have.

I have heretofore ſaid, that you have offered as much as you ought, in offering to live ſingle. If you were never to marry, the eſtate they are ſo loth ſhould go out of their name, would,

in time, I ſuppoſe, revert to your brother: and *he* or *his* would have it, perhaps, much more certainly this way, than by the precarious reverſions which Solmes makes them hope for. Have you put this into their odd heads, my dear?—The tyrant word AUTHORITY, as they uſe it, can be the only objection againſt this offer.

One thing you muſt conſider, that, if you leave your parents, your duty and love will not ſuffer you to juſtify yourſelf by an appeal againſt them; and ſo you'll have the world againſt you. And ſhould Lovelace continue his wild life, and behave ungratefully to you, will not his baſeneſs ſeem to juſtify their cruel treatment of *you*, as well as their diſlike of *him?*

May Heaven direct you for the beſt!—I can only ſay, that, for my own part, I would do any-thing, go any-whither, rather than be compelled to marry the man I hate; and (were he ſuch a man as Solmes) muſt always hate—Nor could I have borne what you have borne, if from father and uncles, not from brother and ſiſter.

My mother will have it, that after they have tried their utmoſt efforts to bring you into their meaſures, and find them ineffectual, they will recede. But I cannot ſay I am of her mind. She does not own, ſhe has any other authority for this, but her own conjecture. I ſhould otherwiſe have hoped, that your uncle Antony and ſhe had been in one ſecret, and that favourable to you: woe be to one of them at leaſt [To your uncle to be ſure I mean] if they ſhould be in *any other!*

You muſt, if poſſible, avoid being carried to that uncle's. The man, the parſon, your brother and ſiſter preſent!—they'll certainly there marry you to the wretch. Nor will your newly-raiſed ſpirit ſupport you in your reſiſtance on ſuch an occaſion. Your meekneſs will return; and you will have nothing for it but tears [Tears deſpiſed by them all] and ineffectual appeals and lamentations:—and theſe tears, when the ceremony is *profaned*, you muſt ſuddenly dry up; and endeavour to diſpoſe yourſelf to ſuch an humble frame of mind, as may induce your new-made lord to forgive all your paſt declarations of averſion.

In ſhort, my dear, you muſt then blandiſh him over with a confeſſion, that all your paſt behaviour was maidenly reſerve only: and it will be *your* part to convince him of the truth of his impudent ſarcaſm, *That the coyeſt maids make the fondeſt wives.* Thus will you enter the ſtate with a high ſenſe of obligation to his *forgiving goodneſs:* and if you will not be kept to it by that *fear*, by which he propoſes to govern, I am much miſtaken.

Yet, after all, I muſt leave the point undetermined, and only to be determined, as you find they recede from their avowed purpoſe, or reſolve to remove you to your uncle Antony's. But I muſt repeat my wiſhes, that ſomething may fall out, that *neither* of theſe men may call you *his!*—And may you live ſingle, my deareſt friend, till ſome man ſhall offer, that may be as worthy of you, as man *can* be!

But yet, methinks, I would not, that you, who are ſo admirably qualified to adorn the married ſtate, ſhould be always ſingle. You know I am incapable of flattery; and that I always ſpeak and write the ſincere dictates of my heart. Nor can you, from what you muſt know of your own merit, (taken only in a comparative light with others) doubt my ſincerity. For why ſhould a perſon who delights to find out and admire every-thing that is praiſeworthy in *another*, be ſuppoſed ignorant of like perfections in *herſelf*, when ſhe could not ſo much admire them *in* another, if ſhe had them *not* herſelf? And why may not I give *her* thoſe praiſes, which ſhe would give to any other, who had but half of her excellences?—Eſpecially when ſhe is incapable of pride and vain-glory; and neither deſpiſes *others* for the want of her fine qualities, nor over-values *herſelf* upon them?—*Over*-values, did I ſay!—How can that be?

Forgive me, my beloved friend. My admiration of you (encreaſed, as it is, by every letter you write) will not always be held down in ſilence; although, in order to avoid offending you, I generally endeavour to keep it from flowing to my pen, when I write to you, or to my lips, whenever I have the happineſs to be in your company.

I will add nothing (though I could

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an hundred things on account of your lateſt communications) but that I am *your ever-affectionate and faithful,*

ANNA HOWE.

I hope I have pleaſed you with my diſpatch. I wiſh I had been able to pleaſe you with my requeſted advice.

You have given new beauties to the charming ode which you have tranſmitted to me. What pity that the wretches you have to deal with, put you out of your admirable courſe; in the purſuit of which, like the ſun, you was wont to chear and illuminate all you ſhone upon!

LETTER XII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

SUNDAY MORNING, MARCH 26.

HOW ſoothing a thing is praiſe from thoſe we love!—Whether conſcious or not of deſerving it, it cannot but give us great delight, to ſee ourſelves ſtand high in the opinion of thoſe whoſe favour we are ambitious to cultivate. An ingenuous mind will make this farther uſe of it, that if he be ſenſible, that it does not *already* deſerve the charming attributes, it will haſten (before it's friend finds herſelf miſtaken) to obtain the graces it is complimented for: and this it will do, as well in honour to itſelf, as to preſerve it's friend's opinion, and juſtify her judgment. May this be always my aim!—And then you will not only give the *praiſe*, but the *merit*; and I ſhall be more worthy of that friendſhip, which is the only pleaſure I have to boaſt of.

Moſt heartily I thank you for the kind diſpatch of your laſt favour. How much am I indebted to you! and even to your honeſt ſervant!—Under what obligations does my unhappy ſituation lay me!

But let me anſwer the kind contents of it, as well as I may.

As to getting over my diſguſts to Mr. Solmes, it is impoſſible to be done; while he wants generoſity, frankneſs of heart, benevolence, manners, and every qualification that diſtinguiſhes the worthy man. O my dear! what a degree of patience, what a greatneſs of ſoul, is required in the wife, not to deſpiſe a huſband who is more ignorant, more illiterate, more low-minded, than herſelf!—The wretch, veſted with prerogatives, who will claim rule in virtue of them; (and not to *permit* whoſe claim will be as diſgraceful to the *preſcribing* wife as to the *governed* huſband) how ſhall ſuch a huſband as this be borne, were he, for reaſons of *convenience* and *intereſt*, even to be our CHOICE? But, to be compelled to have ſuch a one, and that compulſion to ariſe from motives as unworthy of the *preſcribers* as of the *preſcribed*, who can think of getting over an averſion ſo juſtly founded? How much eaſier to bear the *temporary* perſecutions I labour under, *becauſe* temporary, than to reſolve to be *ſuch* a man's for *life*? Were I to comply, muſt I not leave my relations, and go to him? *A month* will decide the one, perhaps: but what a *duration of woe* will the other be!—Every day, it is likely, riſing to witneſs to ſome new breach of an altar-vowed duty!

Then, my dear, the man ſeems already to be meditating vengeance againſt me for an averſion I cannot help: for yeſterday my ſaucy gaolereſs aſſured me, That all my oppoſitions would not ſignify that *pinch of ſnuff*, holding out her genteel finger and thumb: that I *muſt* have Mr. Solmes: that, therefore, I had not beſt carry my jeſt too far; for that Mr. Solmes was a man of ſpirit, and had told HER, that as I ſhould ſurely be his, I acted very *unpolitely*; ſince, if he had not more *mercy* [that was *her* word; I know not if it were *his*] than I had, I might have cauſe to repent the uſage I gave him to the laſt day of my life.

But enough of this man; who by what you repeat from Sir Harry Downeton, has all the inſolence of his ſex, without any one quality to make that inſolence tolerable.

I have received two letters from Mr. Lovelace, ſince his viſit to you; which make three that I have not anſwered. I doubt not his being very uneaſy; but in his laſt he complains in high terms of my ſilence; not in the ſtill ſmall voice, or rather ſtile of an humble lover, but in a ſtile like that which would pro-

bably be uſed by a ſlighted protector. And his pride is again touched, that like a *thief*, or *eves-dropper*, he is forced to dodge about in hopes of a letter, and return five miles (and then to an inconvenient lodging) without any.

His letters, and the copy of mine to him, ſhall ſoon attend you: till when, I will give you the ſubſtance of what I wrote him yeſterday.

I take him ſeverely to taſk for his freedom in threatening me, through you, with a viſit to Mr. Solmes, or to my brother. I ſay, That, ſurely, I muſt be thought to be a creature fit to bear *any-thing*; that violence and menaces from ſome of my *own family* are not enough for me to bear, in order to make me avoid *him*; but that I muſt have them from *him* too, if I oblige thoſe to whom it is both my *inclination* and *duty* to oblige in every-thing that is reaſonable, and in my power.

Very extraordinary, I tell him, that a violent ſpirit ſhall threaten to do a raſh and unjuſtifiable thing, which concerns *me* but a little, and himſelf a great deal, if I do not ſomething *as* raſh, my character and ſex conſidered, to divert him from it.

I even hint, that, however it would affect *me*, were any miſchief to happen on my account, yet there are perſons, as far as I know, who in my caſe would not think there would be reaſon for *much* regret, were ſuch a committed raſhneſs as he threatens Mr. Solmes with, to rid her of *two* perſons whom had ſhe never known, ſhe had never been unhappy.

This is plain-dealing, my dear: and I ſuppoſe he will put it into ſtill plainer Engliſh for me.

I take his pride to taſk, on his diſdaining to watch for my letters; and for his *eves-dropping* language: and ſay, That, ſurely, he has the leſs reaſon to think ſo hardly of his ſituation; ſince his faulty morals are the cauſe of all; and ſince faulty morals deſervedly level all diſtinction, and bring down rank and birth to the *Canaille*, and to the neceſſity which he ſo much regrets, of appearing (if I muſt deſcend to his language) as an *eves-dropper* and a *thief*. And then I forbid him ever to expect another letter from me that is to ſubject him to ſuch diſgraceful hardſhips.

As to the ſolemn vows and proteſtations he is ſo ready, upon all occaſions, to make, they have the leſs weight with me, I tell him, as they give a kind of demonſtration, that he himſelf, from his own character, thinks there is *reaſon* to make them. *Deeds* are to be the only evidence of *intentions*. And I am more and more convinced of the neceſſity of breaking off a correſpondence with a perſon, whoſe addreſſes I ſee it is impoſſible either to expect my friends to encourage, or him to appear to wiſh that they ſhould think him worthy of encouragement.

What, therefore, I repeatedly deſire is, That ſince his birth, alliances, and expectations, are ſuch as will at any time, if his immoral character be not an objection, procure him at leaſt equal advantages in a woman whoſe taſte and inclinations moreover might be better adapted to his own; I inſiſt upon it, as well as adviſe it, that he give up all thoughts of me: and the rather, as he has all along (by his threatening and unpolite behaviour to my friends, and whenever he ſpeaks of them) given me reaſon to conclude, that there is more malice to *them*, than regard to *me*, in his perſeverance.

This is the ſubſtance of the letter I have written to him.

The man, to be ſure, muſt have the penetration to obſerve, that my correſpondence with him hitherto is owing more to the ſeverity I meet with, than to a very high value for him. And ſo I would have him think. What a *worſe* than Moloch deity is that, which expects an offering of reaſon, duty, and diſcretion, to be made to it's ſhrine!

Your mother is of opinion, you ſay, that *at laſt* my friends will relent. Heaven grant that they may!—But my brother and ſiſter have ſuch an influence over every-body, and are ſo determined; ſo pique themſelves upon ſubduing me, and carrying their point; that I deſpair that they will—And yet, if they do not, I frankly own, I would not ſcruple to throw myſelf upon any not diſreputable protection, by which I might avoid my preſent perſecutions, on one hand, and not give Mr. Lovelace advantage over me, on the other—That is to ſay, were there manifeſtly *no other* way left me: for, if there *were*, I ſhould think the leaving my father's houſe, without his conſent, one of the moſt inexcuſeable actions

actions I could be guilty of, were the protection to be ever so unexceptionable; and this notwithstanding the independent fortune willed me by my grandfather. And indeed I have often reflected with a degree of indignation and disdain, upon the thoughts of what a low, selfish creature that child must be, who is to be reined in only by the hopes of what a parent can or will do for her.

But notwithstanding all this, I owe it to the sincerity of friendship to confess, that I know not what I *should* have done, had your advice been conclusive any-way. Had you, my dear, been witness to my different emotions, as I read your letter, when, in one place, you advise me of my danger, if I am carried to my uncle's; in another, when you own you could not bear what I bear, and would do any-thing rather than marry the man you hate; yet, in another, represent to me my reputation suffering in the world's eye; and the necessity I should be under to justify my conduct, at the expence of my friends, were I to take a rash step; in another, insinuate the *dishoneſt* figure I should be forced to make, in so compelled a matrimony; endeavouring to cajole, fawn upon, and play the hypocrite with a man to whom I have an aversion; who would have reason to *believe* me an hypocrite, as well from my former avowals, as from the sense he *must* have (if common sense he has) of his own demerits—The necessity you think there would be for me, the more averse I really was, to seem the fonder of him: a fondness (were I capable of so much dissimulation) that would be imputable to disgraceful motives; as it would be too visible, that love, either of person or mind, could be neither of them—Then his undoubted, his even constitutional narrowness; his too probable jealousy, and unforgivingness, bearing in his mind my declared aversion, and the unfeigned despights I took all opportunities to do him, in order to discourage his addresses: a preference avowed against him from the *fame* motive: with the pride he professes to take in curbing and sinking the spirits of a woman he had acquired a right to tyrannize over: had you, I say, been witness of my different emotions as I read; now leaning this way, now that; now perplexed; now apprehensive; now angry at one, then at another; now resolving; now doubting—you would have seen the power you have over me; and would have had reason to believe, that, had you given your advice in any determined or positive manner, I had been ready to have been concluded by it. So, my dear, you will find, from these acknowledgments, that you must justify me to those laws of friendship, which require undisguised frankness of heart; although your justification of me in that particular, will perhaps be at the expence of my prudence.

But, upon the whole, this I do repeat—That nothing but the *laſt* extremity shall make me abandon my father's house; if they will permit me to stay; and if I can, by any means, by any honest pretences, but keep off my evil destiny in it till my cousin Morden arrives. As one of my trustees, *his* is a protection, into which I may without discredit throw myself, if my other friends shall remain determined. And this (although they seem too well aware of it) is all my hope: for, as to Lovelace, were I to be sure of his tenderness, and even of his reformation, must not the thoughts of embracing the offered protection of his family, be the same thing in the world's eye, as accepting of his own?—Could I avoid receiving his visits at his own relations? Must I not be his, whatever (on seeing him in a *nearer* light) I should find him out to be? For you know, it has always been my observation, that very few people in courtship see each other as they are. Oh! my dear! how wise have I endeavoured to be! how anxious to chuse, and to avoid every-thing, *precautiously*, as I may say, that might make me happy, or unhappy; yet all my wisdom now, by a strange fatality, likely to become foolishness!

Then you tell me, in your usual kindly-partial manner, what is expected of *me*, more than would be of some others. This should be a lesson to me. Whatever my motives were, the world would not know them: to complain of a brother's unkindness, *that*, indeed, I might do; differences between brothers and sisters, where interests clash, but too commonly arise; but where the severe father cannot be separated from the faulty brother; who could bear to lighten herself, by loading a father?—Then, in this particular case, must not the hatred

tred Mr. Lovelace expreſſes to every one of my family, (although in return for *their* hatred of *him*) ſhock one extremely? Muſt it not ſhew, that there is ſomething implacable, as well as highly unpolite in his temper?—And what creature can think of marrying ſo as to be out of all hopes ever to be well with her own neareſt and tendereſt relations?

But here, having tired myſelf, and I dare ſay you, I will lay down my pen.

* *

MR. SOLMES is almoſt continually here: ſo is my aunt Hervey; ſo are my two uncles. Something is working againſt me, I doubt. What an uneaſy ſtate is ſuſpenſe!—When a naked ſword, too, ſeems hanging over one's head!

I hear nothing but what this confident creature Betty throws out in the wantonneſs of office. Now it is, 'Why, 'Miſs, don't you look up your things? 'You'll be called upon, depend upon 'it, before you are aware.' Another time ſhe intimates darkly, and in broken ſentences, (as if on purpoſe to teaze me) what *one* ſays, what *another*; with their enquiries how I diſpoſe of my time? And my brother's inſolent queſtion comes frequently in, Whether I am not writing a hiſtory of my ſufferings?

But I am now uſed to her pertneſs: and as it is only through that, that I can hear of any-thing intended againſt me, before it is to be put in execution; and as, when ſhe is moſt impertinent, ſhe pleads a commiſſion for it; I bear with her; yet, now-and-then, not without a little of the heart-burn.

I will depoſit thus far. Adieu, my dear.

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Written on the cover, after ſhe went down, with a pencil:

On coming down, I found your ſecond letter of yeſterday's date*. I have read it; and am in hopes that the incloſed will in a great meaſure anſwer your mother's expectations of me.

My moſt reſpectful acknowledgments to her for it, and for her very kind admonitions.

You'll read to her what you pleaſe of the incloſed.

LETTER XIII.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

SAT. MARCH 25.

I Follow my laſt of this date by command. I mentioned in my former, my mother's opinion of the merit you would have, if you could oblige your friends againſt your own inclination. Our conference upon this ſubject was introduced by the converſation we had had with Sir Harry Downeton; and my mother thinks it of ſo much importance, that ſhe enjoins me to give you the particulars of it. I the rather comply, as I was unable in my laſt to tell what to adviſe you to; and as you will in this recital have my mother's opinion at leaſt; and, perhaps, in *hers*, what the *world's* would be, were it only to know what ſhe knows; and not ſo much as I know.

My mother argues upon this caſe in a moſt diſcouraging manner for all ſuch of our ſex as look forward for happineſs in marriage with the *man of their choice*.

Only, that I know, ſhe has a ſide-view to her daughter; who, at the ſame time that ſhe now prefers no one to another, values not the man her mother moſt regards, of one farthing; or I ſhould lay it more to heart.

'What is there in it,' ſays ſhe, 'that 'all this buſtle is about? Is it ſuch a 'mighty matter for a young woman to 'give up her inclinations to oblige her 'friends?'

'Very well, mamma!' thought I. 'Now, may you aſk this—At FORTY, 'you may—But what would you have 'ſaid at EIGHTEEN, is the queſtion?'

'Either,' ſaid ſhe, 'the lady muſt be 'thought to have very violent inclina-'tions, [and what nice young creature 'would have that ſuppoſed?] which 'ſhe *could* not give up; or a very ſtub-'born will, which ſhe *would* not; or, 'thirdly, have parents ſhe was indiffe-'rent about obliging.'

You know my mother now-and-then argues very notably; always very warmly at leaſt. I happen often to differ from her; and we both think ſo well of our

* See the next Letter.

own

own arguments, that we very seldom are so happy as to convince one another. A pretty common case, I believe, in all *vehement* debatings. She says, I am *too witty*; Anglicé, *too pert*: I, that she is *too wise*; that is to say, being likewise put into English, *Not so young as she has been*: in short, is grown so much into *mother*, that she has forgotten she ever was a *daughter*. So, generally, we call another cause by consent—Yet fall into the old one half a dozen times over, *without* consent—Quitting and resuming, with half-angry faces, forced into a smile, that there might be some room to piece together again: but go to-bed, if bed-time, a little sullen nevertheless; or, if we speak, her silence is broken with an 'Ah, Nancy! You are so live-'ly! so quick! I wish you were less like 'your papa, child!'

I pay it off with thinking, that my mother has no reason to disclaim *her* share in her Nancy: and if the matter go off with greater severity on her side than I wish for, then her favourite Hickman fares the worse for it next day.

I know I am a saucy creature. I know, if I do not *say* so, you will *think* so. So no more of this just now. What I mention it for, is to tell you, that on this serious occasion I will omit, if I can, all that passed between us, that had an air of flippancy on my part, or quickness on my mother's, to let you into the *cool* and the *cogent* of the conversation.

'Look through the families,' said she, 'which we both know, where the 'man and woman have been said to 'marry for love; which (at the time it 'is so called) is perhaps no more than 'a passion begun in folly or thoughtlessness, and carried on from a spirit 'of perverseness and opposition,' [Here we had a parenthetical debate, which I omit;] 'and see, if they appear to be 'happier than those whose principal 'inducement to marry has been con'venience, or to oblige their friends; 'or even whether they are generally *so* 'happy: for *convenience* and *duty*, 'where observed, will afford a *perma'nent* and even an *encreasing* satisfac'tion, (as well at the time, as upon the 'reflection) which seldom fail to re'ward themselves: while *love*, if love '*be* the motive, is an idle passion.' [*Idle in* ONE SENSE *my mother cannot say*; *for love is as busy as a monkey, and as mischievous as a school-boy*]—'It is a 'fervor, that, like all other *fervors*, 'lasts but a little while after marriage; 'a bow over-strained, that soon returns 'to it's natural bent.

'As it is founded generally upon 'mere *notional* excellences, which were 'unknown to the persons themselves 'till attributed to either by the other; 'one, two, or three months, usually 'sets all right on both sides; and then 'with opened eyes they think of each 'other—just as every-body else thought 'of them before.

'The lovers *imaginaries*' [her own notable word!] 'are by that time gone 'off; nature and old habits (painfully 'dispensed with or concealed) return: 'disguises thrown aside, all the moles, 'freckles, and defects in the minds of '*each*, discover themselves; and 'tis 'well if each do not sink in the opi'nion of the other, as much below the 'common standard, as the blinded 'imagination of both had set them 'above it. And now,' said she, 'the 'fond pair, who knew no felicity out 'of each other's company, are so far 'from finding the never-ending va'riety each had proposed in an unre'strained conversation with the other, '(when they seldom were together; 'and always parted with something *to* '*say*; or, on recollection, when parted, 'wishing they *had* said) that they are 'continually on the wing in pursuit of 'amusements out of themselves; and 'those,' concluded my sage mamma, [did you think her wisdom so *very* modern?] 'will perhaps be the livelier to 'each, in which the other has no 'share.'

I told my mother, that if *you* were to take any rash step, it would be owing to the indiscreet violence of your friends. I was afraid, I said, that these reflections upon the conduct of people in the married state, who might set out with better hopes, were but too well grounded: but that this must be allowed me, that if children weighed not these matters so thoroughly as they ought, neither did parents make those allowances for youth, inclination, and inexperience, which had been found necessary to be made for themselves at their childrens time of life.

I remembered a letter, I told her, hereupon, which you wrote a few months ago, personating an anonymous elderly

elderly lady, (in Mr. Wyerley's day of plaguing you) to Miss Drayton's mother, who, by her severity and restraints, had like to have driven the young lady into the very fault against which her mother was most solicitous to guard her. And I dared to say, she would be pleased with it.

I fetched the first draught of it, which, at my request, you obliged me with at the time; and read the whole letter to my mother. But the following passage she made me read twice. I think you once told me you had not a copy of this letter.

'Permit me, Madam,' [says the personated grave writer] 'to observe, that 'if persons of your experience would 'have young people look *forward*, in 'order to be wiser and better by their 'advice, it would be kind in them to 'look *backward*, and allow for their 'childrens youth, and natural vivacity; 'in other words, for their lively hopes, 'unabated by time, unaccompanied by 'reflection, and unchecked by disappointment. Things appear to us all 'in a very different light at our entrance upon a favourite party, or 'tour; when, with golden prospects, 'and high expectations, we rise vigorous and fresh, like the sun beginning it's morning course; from what 'they do, when we sit down at the 'end of our views, tired, and preparing for our journey homeward: for 'then we take into our *reflection*, what 'we had left out in *prospect*, the fatigues, the checks, the hazards, we 'had met with; and make a true estimate of pleasures, which from our 'raised expectations must necessarily 'have fallen miserably short of what 'we had promised ourselves at setting 'out—Nothing but experience can give 'us a strong and efficacious conviction 'of this difference: and when we would 'inculcate the fruits of *that* upon the 'minds of those we love, who have not 'lived long enough to find those fruits; 'and would hope, that our *advice* 'should have as much force upon *them*, 'as *experience* has upon *us*; and which, 'perhaps, *our* parents advice had not 'upon *ourselves* at our daughters time 'of life; should we not proceed by patient reasoning and gentleness, that 'we may not harden, where we would 'convince? For, Madam, the tenderest 'and most generous minds, when harshly treated, become generally the most 'inflexible. If the young lady knows 'her *heart* to be right, however defective her *head* may be for want of 'years and experience, she will be apt 'to be very tenacious. And if she believes her friends to be wrong, although perhaps they may be only so 'in their methods of treating her, how 'much will every *unkind* circumstance 'on the parent's part, or *heedless* one 'on the child's, though ever so slight 'in itself, widen the difference! The 'parent's *prejudice* in dis-favour, will 'confirm the daughter's in favour, of 'the same person; and the best reasonings in the world on either side, will 'be attributed to that prejudice. In 'short, neither of them will be convinced: a perpetual opposition ensues; 'the parent grows impatient; the child 'desperate, and, as a too natural consequence, that falls out which the 'mother was most afraid of, and which 'possibly had not happened, if the 'child's passions had been only *led*, not '*driven*.'

My mother was pleased with the whole letter; and said, It *deserved* to have the success it met with. But asked me what excuse could be offered for a young lady capable of making such reflections, (and who at her time of life could so well assume the character of one of riper years) if she should rush into any fatal mistake herself?

She then touched upon the moral character of Mr. Lovelace; and how reasonable the aversion of your relations is, to a man who gives himself the liberties he is said to take; and who indeed himself denies not the accusation; having been heard to declare, that he will do all the mischief he can to the sex, in revenge for the ill-usage and broken vows of his first love, at a time when he was *too young* [his own expression it seems] to be sincere.

I replied, That I had heard every one say, that the lady meant, really used him ill; that it affected him so much at the time, that he was forced to travel upon it; and to drive her out of his heart, ran into courses which he had ingenuousness enough himself to condemn: that, however, he had denied that he had thrown out such menaces against the sex when charged with them by me

in

in your presence; and declared himself incapable of so unjust and ungenerous a resentment against *all*, for the perfidy of *one*.

You remember this, my dear; as I do your innocent observation upon it, That you could believe his solemn asseveration and denial: 'For surely,' said you, 'the man who would resent, as 'the highest indignity that could be offered to a gentleman, the imputation 'of a *wilful* falsehood, would not be 'guilty of one.'

I insisted upon the extraordinary circumstances in your case; particularizing them. I took notice, that Mr. Lovelace's morals were at one time no objection with your relations for Arabella: that then much was built upon his family, and more upon his parts and learning, which made it out of doubt, that he might be reclaimed by a woman of virtue and prudence: and [pray forgive me for mentioning it] I ventured to add, that although your family might be good sort of folks, as the world went, yet nobody but you imputed to any of them, a *very* punctilious concern for religion or piety—therefore were they the less entitled to object to defects of that kind in others. Then, 'What an odious man,' said I, 'have they picked out to supplant in a 'lady's affections one of the finest 'figures of a man, and one noted for 'his brilliant parts, and other accom-'plishments, whatever his morals may 'be!'

Still my mother insisted, that there was the greater merit in your obedience on that account; and urged, that there hardly ever was a very handsome and a very sprightly man who made a tender and affectionate husband: for that they were generally such Narcissuses, as to imagine every woman ought to think as highly of them, as they did of themselves.

There was no danger from that consideration *here*, I said, because the lady had still greater advantages, both of person and mind, than the man; graceful and elegant, as he must be allowed to be, beyond most of his sex.

She cannot endure to hear me praise any man but her favourite Hickman: upon whom, nevertheless, she generally brings a degree of contempt which he would escape, did she not lessen the little merit he has, by giving him, on all occasions, more than I think he can deserve, and entering him into comparisons in which it is impossible but he must be a sufferer. And now [preposterous partiality!] she thought, for *her* part, that Mr. Hickman, 'bating that his *face* indeed was not so smooth, nor his complexion quite so good, and saving that he was not so presuming and so bold, (which ought to be no fault with a modest woman) equalled Mr. Lovelace *at any hour of the day*.

To avoid entering further into such an *incomparable* comparison, I said, I did not believe, had they left you to your own way, and treated you generously, that you would have had the thought of encouraging any man whom they disliked.

'Then, Nancy,' catching me up, 'the excuse is less—For, if so, must 'there not be more of *contradiction*, 'than *love*, in the case?'

'Not so, neither, Madam: for I 'know Miss Clarissa Harlowe would 'prefer Mr. Lovelace to all men, if 'morals—'

'IF, Nancy!—That *if* is every-'thing.—Do you really think she loves 'Mr. Lovelace?'

What would you have had me to say, my dear?—I won't tell you what I *did* say: but had I *not* said what I *did*, who would have believed me?

Besides, I *know* you love him!—Excuse me, my dear: yet, if you deny it, what do you but reflect upon yourself, as if you thought you *ought not* to allow yourself in what you cannot help doing?

'Indeed, Madam,' said I, 'the man 'is worthy of any woman's love,'—[*if*, again, I *could* say] 'But her pa-'rents—'

'Her parents, Nancy!'—[You know, my dear, how my mother, who accuses her daughter of quickness is evermore interrupting one!]

'May take wrong measures,' said I.

'Cannot do wrong—They have rea-'son, I'll warrant,' said she.

'By which they may provoke a 'young woman,' said I, 'to do rash 'things, which otherwise she would 'not do.'

'But if it *be* a rash thing,' [returned she] 'should she do it? A prudent 'daughter will not wilfully err, be-'cause her parents err, if they *were* 'to err: if she *do*, the world which

'blames the parents, will not acquit 'the child. All that can be said, in 'extenuation of a daughter's error 'in this case, arises from a kind con-'sideration, which Miss Clary's let-'ter to Lady Drayton pleads for, to 'be paid to *her* daughter's youth and 'inexperience. And will such an ad-'mirable young person as Miss Cla-'rissa Harlowe, whose prudence, as we 'see, qualifies her to be an adviser of 'persons much older than herself, take 'shelter under so poor a covert?

'Let her know, Nancy, out of hand, 'what I say; and I charge you to re-'present farther to her, That let her 'dislike one man and approve of ano-'ther ever so much, it will be expect-'ed of a young lady of her unbounded 'generosity and greatness of mind, that 'she should *deny herself*, when she can 'oblige all her family by so doing—'No less than ten or a dozen perhaps 'the nearest and dearest to her of all 'the persons in the world, an indul-'gent father and mother at the head of 'them. It may be *fancy* only on her 'side; but parents look deeper: and 'will not Miss Clarissa Harlowe give 'up her *fancy* to her parents *judg-'ment?*'

I said a great deal upon this *judg-ment* subject: all that you could wish I should say; and all that your ex-traordinary case allowed me to say. And my mother was so sensible of the force of it, that she charged me not to write to you any part of my answer to what she said; but only what she herself had advanced; lest, in so critical a case, it should induce you to take measures which might give us both reason (me for giving it, you for following it) to repent it as long as we lived.

And thus, my dear, have I set my mother's arguments before you. And the rather, as I cannot myself tell what to advise you to do—You know best your own heart; and what that will let you do.

Robin undertakes to deposit this very early, that you may have an opportu-nity to receive it by your first morning airing.

Heaven guide and direct you for the best, is the incessant prayer of *your ever-affectionate*

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XIV.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON.

I Am in great apprehensions. Yet I cannot help repeating my humble thanks to your mother and you, for your last favour. I hope her kind end is answered by the contents of my last. Yet I must not think it enough to ac-knowledge her goodness to me, with a pencil only, on the cover of a letter sealed up. A few lines give me leave to write with regard to my anonymous letter to Lady Drayton. If I did *not* at that time tell you, as I believe I *did*, that my excellent Mrs. Norton gave me her assistance in that letter, I now acknowledge that she did.

Pray let your mother know this, for two reasons: one, that I may not be thought to arrogate to myself a discre-tion which does not belong to me; the other, that I may not suffer by the se-vere, but just inference she was pleased to draw; *doubling* my faults upon me, if I myself should act unworthy of the advice I was supposed to give.

Before I come to what most nearly affects me, I must chide you, once more, for the severe, the *very* severe things you mention of our family, to the disparagement of their MORALS. Indeed, my dear, I wonder at you!—A slighter occasion might have passed me, after I have written to you so of-ten to so little purpose, on this topick. But, affecting as my own circum-stances are, I cannot pass by without animadversion the reflection I need not repeat in words.

There is not a worthier woman in England than my mother. Nor is my father that man you sometimes make him. Excepting in one point, I know not any family which lives up more to their duty, than the principals of ours. A little too *uncommunicative* for their great circumstances—that is all.—Why, then, have they not reason to insist upon unexceptionable morals in a man whose sought-for relationship to them, by a marriage in their family, they have certainly a right either to al-low of, or to disallow?

Another

'Another line or two, before I am engroſſed by my own concerns—Upon your treatment of Mr. Hickman. Is it, do you think, generous to revenge upon an innocent perſon, the diſpleaſure you receive from another quarter, where I doubt you are a treſpaſſer too? —But one thing I could tell him; and you had not beſt provoke me to it: it is this, That no woman uſes ill the man ſhe does not abſolutely reject, but ſhe has it in her heart to make him amends, when her tyranny has had it's run, and he has compleated the meaſure of his ſervices and patience. My mind is not enough at eaſe, to puſh this matter farther.

I will now give you the occaſion of my preſent apprehenſions.

I had reaſon to fear, as I mentioned in mine of this morning, that a ſtorm was brewing. Mr. Solmes came home from church this afternoon with my brother. Soon after, Betty brought me up a letter, without ſaying from whom. It was in a cover, and directed by a hand I never ſaw before; as if it were ſuppoſed that I would not receive and open it, had I known from whom it came.

Theſe are the contents—

'TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

'SUNDAY, MARCH 26.

'DEAREST MADAM,

'I Think myſelf a moſt unhappy 'man, in that I have never yet 'been able to pay my reſpects to you 'with youre conſent, for one halfe-hour. I have ſomething to communicat to you that concernes you much, 'if you be pleaſed to admit me to youre 'ſpeech. Youre honour is concerned 'in it, and the honour of all youre familly. It relates to the deſignes of 'one whom you are ſed to valew more 'than he deſarves; and to ſome of his 'reprobat actions; which I am reddie 'to give you convincing proofes of 'the truth of. I may appear to be intereſted in it: but nevertheleſſe, I am 'reddie to make oathe, that every tittle 'is true: and you will ſee what a man 'you are ſed to favour. But I hope 'not ſo, for your owne honour.

'Pray, Madam, vouchſafe me a hearing, as you valew your honour and 'familly: which will oblidge, deareſt 'Miſs, *your moſt humble and moſt faithful ſervant,*

'ROGER SOLMES.

'I waite below *for* the hope of admittance.'

I have no manner of doubt, that this is a poor device to get this man into my company. I would have ſent down a verbal anſwer; but Betty refuſed to carry any meſſage, which ſhould prohibit his viſiting me. So I was obliged either to ſee him, or to write to him. I wrote therefore an anſwer, of which I ſhall ſend you the rough draught. And now my heart aches for what may follow from it; for I hear a great hurry below.

'TO ROGER SOLMES, ESQ.

'SIR,

'WHATEVER you have to 'communicate to me, which 'concerns my honour, may as well be 'done by writing as by word of mouth. 'If Mr. Lovelace is any of *my* concern, I know not that *therefore* he 'ought to be *yours*: for the uſage I receive on *your* account [I *muſt* think it ſo!] is ſo harſh, that were there not ſuch a man in the world as Mr. *Lovelace*, I would not wiſh to ſee Mr. *Solmes*, no, not for one half-hour, in 'the way he is pleaſed to be deſirous to 'ſee me. I never can be in any danger 'from Mr. Lovelace (and of conſequence, cannot be affected by any of 'your diſcoveries) if the propoſal I 'made be accepted. You have been 'acquainted with it, no doubt. If 'not, be pleaſed to let my friends 'know, that if they will rid *me* of my 'apprehenſions of one gentleman, I 'will rid them of *theirs* of another: 'and then of what conſequence to *them*, 'or to *me*, will it be, whether Mr. 'Lovelace be a good man, or a bad? 'And if not to *them*, nor to *me*, I ſee 'not how it can be of any to *you*. But 'if *you* do, I have nothing to ſay to 'that; and it will be a chriſtian part, 'if you will expoſtulate with him upon 'the errors you have diſcovered, and 'endeavour to make him as good a 'man, as, no doubt, you are *yourſelf*,

'or you would not be so ready to de-
'tect and expose *him*.

'Excuse me, Sir: but after my
'former letter to you, and your unge-
'nerous perseverance; and after this at-
'tempt to avail yourself at the expence
'of another man's character, rather
'than by your own proper merit; I
'see not that you can blame any aspe-
'rity in her, whom you have so largely
'contributed to make unhappy.

'CL. HARLOWE.'

SUNDAY NIGHT.

My father was for coming up to me, in great wrath, it seems; but was persuaded to the contrary. My aunt Hervey was permitted to send me this that follows.—Quick work my dear!

'TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

'NIECE,

'EVERY-BODY is now con-
'vinced, that nothing is to be
'done with you by way of gentleness
'or persuasion. Your mother will not
'permit you to stay in the house; for
'your father is so incensed by your
'strange letter to his friend, that she
'knows not what will be the conse-
'quence if you do. So, you are com-
'manded to get ready to go to your
'uncle Antony's out of hand.

'Your uncle thinks he has not de-
'served of you such an unwillingness as
'you shew to go to his house.

'You don't know the wickedness
'of the man for whose sake you think
'it worth while to quarrel with all
'your friends.

'You must not answer me. There
'will be no end of that.

'You know not the affliction you
'give to every-body; but to none more
'than to *your affectionate aunt*,

'DOROTHY HERVEY.'

Forbid to write to my aunt, I took a bolder liberty. I wrote a few lines to my mother; beseeching her to procure me leave to throw myself at my father's feet, and hers, if I *must* go, (nobody else present) to beg pardon for the trouble I had given them both and their blessings; and to receive their commands as to my removal, and the time for it, from their own lips.

'What new boldness this!—Take
'it back; and bid her learn to obey,'
was my mother's angry answer, with my letter returned, unopened.

But that I might omit nothing, that had an appearance of duty, I wrote a few lines to my father himself to the same purpose; begging that he would not turn me out of his house without his blessing. But this, torn in two pieces, and unopened, was brought me up again by Betty, with an air, one hand held up, the other extended, the torn letter in her open palm; and a
'See here!—What a sad thing is this!
'Nothing will do but duty, Miss!—
'Your papa said, "Let her tell me of
"*deeds*!—I'll receive no *words* from
"her:" and so he tore the letter, and
'flung the pieces at my head.'

So desperate my case, I was resolved not to stop even at this repulse. I took my pen and addressed myself to my uncle Harlowe, inclosing that which my mother had returned unopened, and the torn unopened one sent to my father; having first hurried off a transcript for you.

My uncle was going home, and it was delivered to him just as he stepped into his chariot. What may be the fate of it therefore I cannot know till to-morrow.

The following is a copy of it—

'TO JOHN HARLOWE, ESQ.

'MY DEAR AND EVER-HONOURED
'UNCLE,

'I HAve nobody now, but you to
'whom I can apply, with hope,
'so much as to have my humble ad-
'dresses opened and read. My aunt
'Hervey has given me commands which
'I want to have explained; but she
'has forbid me writing to *her*. Here-
'upon I took the liberty to write to
'my father and mother: you will see,
'Sir, by the torn one, and by the other
'(both unopened) what has been the
'result. This, Sir, perhaps you al-
'ready know: but, as you know not
'the *contents* of the disgraced letters,
'I beseech you to read them both, that
'you may be a witness for me, that they
'are not filled either with complaints

'or

'or expoſtulations, nor contain any-
'thing undutiful. Give me leave to
'ſay, Sir, that if deaf-eared anger
'will neither grant *me* a hearing, nor,
'*what I write* a peruſal, ſome time
'hence the hard-heartedneſs may be
'regretted. I beſeech you, dear, good
'Sir, to let me know what is meant by
'ſending me to my uncle Antony's
'houſe, rather than to yours, or to my
'aunt Hervey's, or elſe-where? If it
'be for what I apprehend it to be, life
'will not be ſupportable upon the
'terms. I beg alſo to know, WHEN I
'am to be turned out of doors!—My
'heart ſtrongly gives me, *that if once*
'*I am compelled to leave this houſe, I*
'*never ſhall ſee it more.*

'It becomes me, however, to de-
'clare, that I write not this through
'perverſeneſs, or in reſentment. God
'knows my heart, I do not! But the
'treatment I apprehend I ſhall meet
'with, if carried to my other uncle's,
'will, in all probability, give the fi-
'niſhing ſtroke to the diſtreſſes, the un-
'deſerved diſtreſſes I will be bold to
'call them, of *your once highly-favour-*
'*ed, but now unhappy,*

'CL. HARLOWE.'

LETTER XV.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

MONDAY MORNING, MARCH 27.

THIS morning early my uncle Harlowe came hither. He ſent up the incloſed very tender letter. It has made me wiſh I *could* oblige him. You will ſee how Mr. Solmes's ill qualities are gloſſed over in it. What blemiſhes does affection hide!—But perhaps they may ſay to me, 'What 'faults does antipathy bring to light!'

Be pleaſed to ſend me back this letter of my uncle by the firſt return.

'SUNDAY NIGHT, OR RATHER 'MONDAY MORNING.

'I Muſt anſwer you, though againſt
'my own reſolution. Every-body
'loves you; and you know they do.
'The very ground you walk upon is
'dear to moſt of us. But how can we
'reſolve to ſee you? There is no ſtand-
'ing againſt your looks and language.
'It is our love makes us decline to ſee
'you. How *can* we, when you are re-
'ſolved *not* to do what we are reſolved
'you *ſhall* do? I never, for my part,
'loved any creature, as I loved you
'from your infancy till now. And
'indeed, as I have often ſaid, never
'was was there a young creature ſo
'deſerving of our love. But what is
'come to you now! Alas! alas! my
'dear kinſwoman, how you fail in the
'trial!

'I have read the letters you incloſed.
'At a proper time, I may ſhew them
'to my brother and ſiſter. But they
'will receive nothing from you at pre-
'ſent.

'For my part, I could not read your
'letter to me, without being unman-
'ned. How can you be ſo unmoved
'yourſelf, yet be ſo able to move every-
'body elſe? How could you ſend ſuch
'a letter to Mr. Solmes? Fie upon
'you! How ſtrangely are you altered!

'Then to treat your brother and ſiſ-
'ter as you did, that they don't care
'to write to you, or to ſee you! Don't
'you know where it is written, That
'*ſoft anſwers turn away wrath?* But
'if you will truſt to your ſharp-point-
'ed wit, you may wound: yet a club
'will beat down a ſword. And how
'can you expect, that they who are
'hurt by you will not hurt you again?
'Was this the way you uſed to take to
'make us all adore you, as we did?
'—No, it was your gentleneſs of heart
'and manners, that made every-body,
'even ſtrangers, at firſt ſight, treat
'you as a lady, and call you a lady,
'though not born one, while your
'elder ſiſter had no ſuch diſtinctions
'paid her. If you *were* envied, why
'ſhould you ſharpen Envy, and file up
'it's teeth to an edge?—You ſee I
'write like an impartial man, and as
'one that loves you ſtill.

'But ſince you have diſplayed your
'talents, and ſpared nobody, and
'moved every-body, without being
'moved, you have but made us ſtand
'the cloſer and firmer together. This
'is what I likened to an *embattled pha-*
'*lanx*, once before. Your aunt Her-
'vey forbids your writing, for the
'ſame reaſon that I muſt not counte-
'nance it. We are all afraid to ſee
'you, becauſe we know we ſhall be
'made as ſo many fools. Nay, your
'mother

'mother is so afraid of you, that once 'or twice, when she thought you was 'coming to force yourself into her 'presence, she shut the door, and lock-'ed herself in, because she knew she 'must not see you upon *your* terms, 'and you are resolved you will not see 'her upon *hers*.

'Resolve but to oblige us all, my 'dearest Miss Clary, and you shall see 'how we will clasp you every-one by 'turns to our rejoicing hearts. If the 'one man has not the wit, and the 'parts, and the person, of the other, 'no one breathing has a worse heart 'than that other: and is not the love 'of all your friends, and a sober man '(if he be *not* so polished) to be pre-'ferred to a debauchee, though ever so 'fine a man to look at? You have such 'talents, that you will be adored by 'the one: but the other has as much 'advantage in those respects, as you 'have yourself, and will not set by 'them one straw. For husbands are 'sometimes jealous of their authority 'with witty wives. You will have in 'one, a man of virtue. Had you not 'been so rudely affronting to him, he 'would have made your ears tingle 'with what he could have told you of 'the other.

'Come, my dear niece, let me have 'the honour of doing with you what 'nobody else yet has been able to do. 'Your father, mother, and I, will di-'vide the pleasure, and the *honour*, I 'will again call it, between us; and 'all past offences shall be forgiven; and 'Mr. Solmes, we will engage, shall 'take nothing amiss hereafter, of what 'has passed.

'He knows, he says, what a jewel 'that man will have, who can obtain 'your favour; and he will think light 'of all he has suffered, or shall suffer, 'in obtaining you.

'Dear, sweet creature, oblige us: 'and oblige us with a grace. It *must* 'be done, whether with a grace or not. 'I do assure you it *must*. You must 'not conquer father, mother, uncles, 'every-body: depend upon that.

'I have sat up half the night to 'write this. You do not know how 'I am touched at reading yours, and 'writing this. Yet will I be at Har-'lowe Place early in the morning. So, 'upon reading this, if you will oblige 'us all, send me word to come up to 'your apartment: and I will lead you 'down, and present you to the embraces 'of every-one. And you will then 'see, you have more of a brother and 'sister in them both, than of late your 'prejudices will let you think you 'have. This from one who used to 'love to stile himself, *your paternal* 'uncle,

'JOHN HARLOWE.'

In about an hour after this kind letter was given me, my uncle sent up to know, if he should be a welcome visitor, upon the terms mentioned in his letter? He bid Betty bring him down a verbal answer: a written one, he said, would be a bad sign; and he bid her therefore not bring a letter. But I had just finished the inclosed transcription of one I had been writing. She made a difficulty to carry it; but was prevailed upon to oblige me by a token which these Mrs. Bettys cannot withstand.

'DEAR AND HONOURED SIR,

'HOW you rejoice me by your con-'descending goodness!—So kind, 'so paternal a letter!—so soothing to a 'wounded heart; and of late what I 'have been so little used to!—How am 'I affected with it! Tell me not, dear 'Sir, of my way of writing: your 'letter has more moved *me*, than I 'have been able to move *any-body!*— 'It has made me wish with all my 'heart, that I could entitle myself to 'be visited upon your own terms; and 'to be led down to my father and mo-'ther by so good and so kind an uncle.

'I will tell you, dearest Sir, what 'I will do to make my peace. I have 'no doubt that Mr. Solmes, upon con-'sideration, would greatly prefer my sis-'ter to such a strange averse creature as 'me. His chief, or one of his chief 'motives in his address to me, is, as I 'have reason to believe, the contiguity 'of my grandfather's estate to his own. 'I will resign it; for ever I will resign 'it: and the resignation must be good, 'because I will never marry at all. I 'will make it over to my sister, and 'her heirs for ever. I shall have no 'heirs, but my brother and her; and 'I will receive, as of my father's 'bounty, such an annuity (not in lieu 'of the estate, but as *of* his bounty) 'as he shall be pleased to grant me, if

'it

'st be ever so small: and whenever I 'disoblige him, he to withdraw it, at 'his pleasure.

'Will not this be accepted?—Surely 'it must—Surely it will!—I beg of 'you, dearest Sir, to propose it; and 'second it with your interest. This 'will answer every end. My sister 'has a high opinion of Mr. Solmes. 'I never can have *any* in the light he 'is proposed to me. But as my sis'ter's husband, he will be always en'titled to my respect; and shall have it.

'If this be accepted, grant me, Sir, 'the honour of a visit; and do me 'then the inexpressible pleasure of lead'ing me down to the feet of my ho'noured parents, and they shall find 'me the most dutiful of children; and 'to the arms of my brother and sis'ter, and they shall find me the most 'obliging and most affectionate of sis'ters.

'I wait, Sir, for your answer to 'this proposal, made with the whole 'heart of *your dutiful and most obliged* 'niece,

'CL. HARLOWE.'

MONDAY NOON.

I HOPE this will be accepted: for Betty tells me, that my uncle Antony and my aunt Hervey are sent for; and not Mr. Solmes; which I look upon as a favourable circumstance. With what chearfulness will I assign over this envied estate!—What a much more valuable consideration shall I part with it for!—The love and favour of all my relations! That love and favour, which I used for eighteen years together to rejoice in, and be distinguished by!—And what a charming pretence will this afford me of breaking with Mr. Lovelace! And how easy will it possibly make him to part with *me!*

I found this morning in the usual place, a letter from him, in answer, I suppose, to mine of Friday, which I deposited not till Saturday. But I have not opened it; nor will I, till I see what effect this new offer will have.

Let me but be permitted to avoid the man I *hate*; and I will give up with chearfulness, the man I *could prefer*. To renounce the one, were I really to value him as much as you seem to imagine, can give but a *temporary* concern, which *time* and *discretion* will alleviate. *This* is a sacrifice which a child owes to parents and friends, if they insist upon it's being made. But the other, to marry a man one *cannot endure*, is not only a dishoneft thing, as to the man; but it is enough to make a creature who wishes to be a *good wife*, a bad or indifferent one, as I once wrote to the man himself: and then she can hardly be either a *good mistress*, or a *good friend*; or any-thing but a discredit to her family, and a bad example to all around her.

Methinks I am loth, in the *suspense* I am in at present, to deposit this, because it will be leaving you in one as *great*: but having been prevented by Betty's officiousness twice, I will now go down to my little poultry; and if I have an opportunity, will leave it in the usual place, where I hope to find something from you.

LETTER XVI.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

MONDAY AFTERNOON, MARCH 27.

I Have deposited my narrative down to this day noon; but I hope soon to follow it with another letter, that I may keep you as little a while as possible in that suspense which I am so much affected by at this moment: for my heart is disturbed at every foot I hear stir; and at every door below that I hear open or shut.

They have been all assembled some time, and are in close debate I believe: but can there be room for long debate upon a proposal, which, if accepted, will so effectually answer all their views? —Can they insist a moment longer upon my having Mr. Solmes, when they see what sacrifices I am ready to make, to be freed from his addresses?—O but I suppose the struggle is, first, with Bella's nicety, to persuade her to accept of the estate, and of the husband; and next, with her pride, to take her *sister's refusals*, as she once phrased it! —Or, it may be, my brother is insisting upon equivalents for his reversion in the estate: and these sort of things take up but too much the attention of some of our family. To these, no doubt, one or both, it must be owing, that

that my propoſal admits of ſo much conſideration.

I want, methinks, to ſee what Mr. Lovelace, in his letter ſays. But I will deny myſelf *this* piece of curioſity till that which is raiſed by my preſent ſuſpenſe is anſwered.—Excuſe me, my dear, that I thus trouble you with my uncertainties: but I have no employment, nor heart, if I had, to purſue any other but what my pen affords me.

MONDAY EVENING.

WOULD you believe it?—Betty, by anticipation, tells me, that I am to be refuſed. I am a vile, artful creature. Every-body is too good to me. My uncle Harlowe has been *taken-in*, that's the phraſe. They knew how it would be, if he either wrote to me, or ſaw me. He has, however, been made aſhamed to be ſo wrought upon. A pretty thing truly in the eye of the world would it be, were they to take me at my word! It would look as if they had treated me thus hardly, as *I* think it, for this very purpoſe. My *peculiars*, particularly Miſs Howe, would give it that turn; and I myſelf could mean nothing by it, but to ſee if it would be accepted in order to ſtrengthen my own arguments againſt Mr. Solmes. It was amazing, that it could admit of a moment's deliberation: that any-thing could be *ſuppoſed* to be done in it. It was equally againſt law and equity: and a fine ſecurity Miſs Bella would have, or Mr. Solmes, when I could reſume it when I would!—My *brother* and *ſhe* my heirs! 'O the 'artful creature!'—*I* to reſolve to live ſingle, when Lovelace is ſo *ſure* of me—and every-where declares as much!—and can whenever he pleaſes, if my huſband, claim under the will!—Then the inſolence—the confidence—[as Betty mincingly told me, that *one* ſaid; you may eaſily gueſs who] that ſhe, who was ſo juſtly in diſgrace for downright rebellion, ſhould pretend to preſcribe to the whole family!—ſhould name a huſband for her elder ſiſter!—What a triumph would her obſtinacy go away with, to delegate her commands, not as from a priſon, as ſhe called it, but as from her throne, to her elders and betters; and to her father and mother too!—Amazing, perfectly amazing, that any-body could argue upon ſuch a propoſal as this!—It was a maſterſtroke of *fineſſe*—It was ME in perfection—Surely my uncle Harlowe will never again be ſo taken-in!

All this was the readier told me, becauſe it was againſt me, and would teaze and vex me. But as ſome of this fine recapitulation implied, that ſomebody ſpoke up for me, I was curious to know who it was: but Betty would not tell me, for fear I ſhould have the conſolation to find that *all* were not againſt me.

But do you not ſee, my dear, what a ſad creature ſhe is whom you honour with your friendſhip?—You could not doubt your influence over me: why did you not let me know myſelf a little better?—Why did you not take the friendly liberty I have always taken with you, and tell me my faults, and what a ſpecious hypocrite I am? For if my brother and ſiſter could make ſuch diſcoveries, how is it poſſible, that faults ſo enormous [You could ſee *others*, you thought, of a *more ſecret* nature!] could eſcape your penetrating eye?

Well, but now, it ſeems, they are debating how and by whom to anſwer me: for they know not, nor *are* they to know, that Mrs. Betty has told me all theſe fine things. One deſires to be excuſed, it ſeems: another chuſes not to have any-thing to ſay to me; another has enough of me; and of writing to ſo ready a ſcribbler, there will be no end.

Thus are thoſe imputed qualifications, which uſed ſo lately to gain me applauſe, now become my crimes: ſo much do diſguſt and anger alter the property of things.

The reſult of their debate, I ſuppoſe, will ſomehow or other be communicated to me by-and-by. But let me tell you, my dear, that I am made ſo deſperate, that I am afraid to open Mr. Lovelace's letter, leſt, in the humour I am in, I ſhould do ſomething (if I find it not exceptionable) that may give me repentance as long as I live.

MONDAY NIGHT.

THIS moment the following letter is brought me by Betty.

'MONDAY, FIVE O'CLOCK.

'MISS CUNNING-ONES,

'YOUR fine new propoſal is thought 'unworthy of a particular anſwer. 'Your uncle Harlowe is aſhamed to be 'ſo taken-in. Have you no new fetch

'for

'for your uncle Antony? Go round 'with us, child, now your hand's in. 'But I was bid to write only one line, 'that you might not complain, as you 'did of your worthy sister, for the free-'doms you provoked: it is this—Pre-'pare yourself. To-morrow you go 'to my uncle Antony's. That's all, 'child.

'JAMES HARLOWE.'

I was vexed to the heart at this: and immediately, in the warmth of resentment, wrote the inclosed to my uncle Harlowe; who it seems stays here this night.

'TO JOHN HARLOWE, ESQ.

'MONDAY NIGHT.

'HONOURED SIR,

'I Find I am a very sad creature, and 'did not know it. I wrote not to 'my brother. To *you*, Sir, I wrote. 'From *you* I hope the honour of an an-'swer. No one reveres her uncle more 'than I do. Nevertheless, I will be 'bold to say, that the distance, great 'as it is, between uncle and niece, ex-'cludes not such a hope: and I think 'I have not made a proposal that de-'serves to be treated with scorn.

'Forgive me, Sir—My heart is full. 'Perhaps one day you may think you 'have been *prevailed upon* (for that is 'plainly the case!) to join to treat me— 'as I do not deserve to be treated. If '*you* are ashamed, as my brother hints, 'of having expressed any returning ten-'derness to me, God help me! I see I 'have no mercy to expect from any-'body! But, Sir, from *your* pen let me 'have an answer; I humbly implore it 'of you—Till my brother can recollect 'what belongs to a sister, I will take 'from *him* no answer to the letter I 'wrote to *you*, nor any commands what-'ever.

'*I* move every-body!—This, Sir, is 'what you are pleased to mention—But 'whom have I moved?—One person in 'the family has more moving ways than 'I have, or he could never so unde-'servedly have made every-body asham-'ed to shew tenderness to a poor dis-'tressed child of the same family.

'Return me not this with contempt, 'or torn, or unanswered, I beseech you. 'My father has a title to do that, or 'any-thing, by his child: but from no 'other person in the world of your sex, 'Sir, ought a young creature of mine '(while she preserves a supplicating 'spirit) to be so treated.

'When what I have before written 'in the humblest strain has met with 'such strange constructions, I am afraid 'that this unguarded scrawl will be 'very ill received. But I beg, Sir, you 'will oblige me with one line, be it 'ever so harsh, in answer to my pro-'posal. I still think it ought to be at-'tended to. I will enter into the most 'solemn engagements to make it valid 'by a perpetual single life. In a word, 'any-thing I *can* do, I *will* do, to be 'restored to all your favours. More I 'cannot say, but that I am, very unde-'servedly,

'*A most unhappy Creature.*'

Betty scrupled again to carry this letter; and said, she should have anger; and I should but have it returned in scraps and bits.

'I must take that chance,' said I: 'I only desire that you will deliver it as 'directed.'

Sad doings! very sad! she said, that young ladies should so violently set themselves against their duty.

I told her, she should have the liberty to say what she pleased, so she would but be my messenger that one time—And down she went with it.

I bid her, if she could, slide it into my uncle's hand, unseen; at least unseen by my brother or sister, for fear it should meet, through *their* good offices, with the fate she had bespoken for it.

She would not undertake for that, she said.

I am now in expectation of the result. But having so little ground to hope for either favour or mercy, I opened Mr. Lovelace's letter.

I would send it to you, my dear, (as well as those I shall inclose) by this conveyance; but not being able at present to determine in what manner I shall answer it, I will give myself the trouble of abstracting it here, while I am waiting for what may offer from the letter just carried down.

He laments, as usual, my ill opinion of him, and readiness to believe every-thing to his disadvantage. He puts into plain English, as I supposed he would, my hint, that I might be happier, if, by any rashness he might be guilty of to

Solmes, he ſhould come to an untimely end himſelf.

He is concerned, he ſays, that the violence he had expreſſed on his extreme apprehenſiveneſs of loſing me, ſhould have made him guilty of any-thing I had ſo much reaſon to reſent.

He owns, that he is paſſionate: all good-natured men, he ſays, are ſo; and a ſincere man cannot hide it. But appeals to me, Whether, if any occaſion in the world could excuſe the raſhneſs of his expreſſion, it would not be his preſent dreadful ſituation, through my indifference, and the malice of his enemies?

He ſays, he has more reaſon than ever, from the contents of my laſt, to apprehend, that I ſhall be prevailed upon by force, if not by fair means, to fall in with my brother's meaſures; and ſees but too plainly, that I am preparing him to expect it.

Upon this preſumption, he ſupplicates, with the utmoſt earneſtneſs, that I will not give way to the malice of his enemies.

Solemn vows of reformation, and everlaſting truth and obligingneſs, he makes; all in the ſtile of deſponding humility: yet calls it a cruel turn upon him, to impute his proteſtations to a conſciouſneſs of the neceſſity there is for making them from his bad character.

He deſpiſes himſelf, he ſolemnly proteſts, for his paſt follies: he thanks God he has ſeen his error; and nothing but my more particular inſtructions, is wanting to perfect his reformation.

He promiſes, that he will do every-thing that I ſhall think he can do with honour, to bring about a reconciliation with my father; and even will, if I inſiſt upon it, make the firſt overtures to my brother, and treat him as his own brother, becauſe he is mine, if he will not by new affronts revive the remembrance of the paſt.

He begs, in the moſt earneſt and humble manner, for one half-hour's interview; undertaking by a key, which he owns he has to the garden-door, leading into the *coppice*, as we call it, (if I will but unbolt the door) to come into the garden at night, and wait till I have an opportunity to come to him, that he may re-aſſure me of the truth of all he writes, and of the affection, and, if needful, protection, of all his family.

He preſumes not, he ſays, to write by way of menace to me; but, if I refuſe him this favour, he knows not (ſo deſperate have ſome ſtrokes in my letter made him) what his deſpair may make him do.

He aſks me, Determined as my friends are, and far as they have already gone, and declare they will go, what can I propoſe to do, to avoid having Mr. Solmes, if I am carried to my uncle Antony's; unleſs I reſolve to accept of the protection he has offered to procure me; or except I will eſcape to London, or elſewhere, while I *can* eſcape?

He adviſes me, to ſue to *your* mother, for her private reception of me; only till I can obtain poſſeſſion of my own eſtate, and procure my friends to be reconciled to me; which he is ſure they will be deſirous to *be*, the moment I am out of their power.

He apprizes me, [it is ſtill my wonder, how he comes by his intelligence!] that my friends have written to my couſin Morden to repreſent matters to him in their own partial way; nor doubt they to influence him on their ſide of the queſtion.

That all this ſhews I have but *one* way; if none of my own friends or intimates will receive me.

If I will tranſport him with the honour of my choice of this *one* way, ſettlements ſhall be drawn, with proper blanks, which I ſhall fill up as I pleaſe. Let him but have my commands from my own mouth, all my doubts and ſcruples from my own lips; and only a repetition, that I will not, on any conſideration, be Solmes's wife; and he ſhall be eaſy. But, after ſuch a letter as I have written, nothing but an interview can make him ſo. He beſeeches me, therefore, to unbolt the door, *as that very night*; or, if I receive not this time enough, *this night*—and he will in a diſguiſe that ſhall not give a ſuſpicion who he is, if he ſhould be ſeen, come to the garden door, in hopes to open it with his key; nor will he have any other lodging than in the coppice both nights; watching every wakeful hour for the propitious unbolting, unleſs he has a letter with my orders to the contrary, or to make ſome other appointment.

This letter was dated yeſterday, ſo he was there laſt night, I ſuppoſe; and will be there this night; and I have not written a line to him: and now it is

too

too late, were I determined *what* to write.

I hope he will not go to Mr. Solmes.—I hope he will not come hither.—If he do either, I will break with him for ever.

What have I to do with such head-strong spirits? I wish I had never—But what signifies wishing?—I am strangely perplexed—But I need not have told you this, after such a representation of my situation.

LETTER XVII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

TUESDAY MORNING, 7 O'CLOCK.

MY uncle has vouchsafed to answer me. These that follow are the contents of his letter; but just now brought me, although written last night—Late I suppose.

'MONDAY NIGHT.

'MISS CLARY,

'SINCE you are grown such a bold 'challenger, and teach us all our 'duty, though you will not practise 'your own, I *must* answer you. No-'body wants your estate from you. 'Are *you*, who refuse every-body's ad-'vice, to prescribe a husband to your '*sister?* Your letter to Mr. Solmes is 'inexcusable. I blamed you for it be-'fore. Your parents *will* be obeyed. 'It is fit they *should*. Your mother 'has, nevertheless, prevailed to have 'your going to your uncle Antony's 'put off till Thursday: yet owns you 'deserve not that, or any other favour 'from her. I will receive no more of 'your letters. You are too artful for 'me. You are an ungrateful and un-'reasonable child: must you have your 'will paramount to every-body's? How 'are you altered! *Your displeased uncle,*

'JOHN HARLOWE.'

To be carried away on Thursday—To the moated-house—To the chapel!—To Solmes!—How can I think of this!—They will make me desperate.

TUESDAY MORNING, EIGHT O'CLOCK.

I HAVE another letter from Mr. Lovelace. I opened it with the expectation of it's being filled with bold and free complaints, on my not writing to prevent his two nights watching, in weather not extremely agreeable. But, instead of complaints, he is full of tender concern lest I may have been prevented by indisposition, or by the closer confinement which he has frequently cautioned me that I may expect.

He says, he had been in different disguises loitering about our garden and park-wall, all the day on Sunday last; and all Sunday night was wandering about the coppice, and near the back-door. It rained; and he has got a great cold, attended with feverishness, and so hoarse, that he has almost lost his voice.

Why did he not flame out in his letter?—Treated as I am treated by my friends, it is dangerous to be laid under the sense of an obligation to an addresser's patience; especially when such a one suffers in health for my sake.

He had no shelter, he says, but under the great overgrown ivy, which spreads wildly round the heads of two or three oaklings; and that was soon wet through.

You remember the spot. You and I, my dear, once thought ourselves obliged to the natural shade which those ivy-covered oaklings afforded us, in a sultry day.

I can't help saying, I am sorry he has suffered for my sake—But it is his own seeking.

His letter is dated last night at eight: and indisposed as he is, he tells me, that he will watch till ten, in hopes of my giving him the meeting he so earnestly requests. And after that, he has a mile to walk to his horse and servant; and four miles then to ride to his inn.

He owns, that he has an intelligencer in our family; who has failed him for a day or two past: and not knowing how I do, or how I may be treated, his anxiety is encreased.

This circumstance gives me to guess who this intelligencer is; Joseph Leman: the very creature employed and confided in, more than any other, by my brother.

This is not an honourable way of proceeding in Mr. Lovelace. Did he learn this infamous practice of corrupting the servants of other families at the French court, where he resided a good while?

I have been often jealous of this Le-

man in my little airings and poultry-visits. Doubly obsequious as he was always to me, I have thought him my brother's spy upon me; and although he obliged me by his hastening out of the garden and poultry-yard, whenever I came into either, have wondered, that from *his reports* my liberties of those kinds have not been abridged*. So, possibly, this man may be bribed by both, and yet betray both. Worthy views want not such obliquities as these on either side. An honest mind must rise into indignation both at the traitor-maker and the traitor.

He presses with the utmost earnestness for an interview. He would not presume, he says, to disobey my last personal commands, that he should not endeavour to attend me again in the Wood House. But says, he can give me such reasons for my permitting him to wait upon my father or uncles, as he hopes will be approved by me: for he cannot help observing, that it is no more suitable to my own spirit than to his, that he, a man of fortune and family, should be obliged to pursue such a clandestine address, as would only become a vile fortune-hunter. But, if I will give my consent for his visiting me like a man, and a gentleman, no ill-treatment shall provoke him to forfeit his temper.

Lord M. will accompany him, if I please: or, Lady Betty Lawrance will first make the visit to my mother, or to my aunt Hervey, or even to my uncles, if I chuse it. And such terms shall be offered, as *shall* have weight upon them.

He begs, that I will not deny him making a visit to Mr. Solmes. By all that's good, he vows, that it shall not be with the least intention either to hurt or affront him; but only to set before him, calmly, and rationally, the consequences that may possibly flow from so fruitless a perseverance, as well as the ungenerous folly of it, to a mind so noble as mine. He repeats his own resolution to attend my pleasure, and Mr. Morden's arrival and advice, for the reward of his own patience.

It is impossible, he says, but one of these methods *must* do. Presence, he observes, even of a disliked person, takes off the edge of resentments which absence whets, and makes keen.

He therefore most earnestly repeats his importunities for the supplicated interview. He says, he has business of consequence in London: but cannot stir from the inconvenient spot where he has for some time resided, in disguises unworthy of himself, until he can be absolutely certain, that I shall not be prevailed upon, either by force or otherwise; and until he finds me delivered from the insults of my brother. Nor ought this to be an indifferent point to one, for whose sake all the world reports me to be used unworthily.—But *one* remark, he says, he cannot help making; That did my friends know the little favour I shew him, and the very great distance I keep him at, they would have no reason to confine me on his account: and *another*, that they *themselves* seem to think him entitled to a different usage, and expect that he receives it; when, in truth, what he meets with from me is exactly what they wish him to meet with, excepting in the favour of the correspondence I honour him with; upon which, he says, he puts the highest value, and for the sake of which he has submitted to a thousand indignities.

He renews his professions of reformation: he is convinced, he says, that he has already run a long and dangerous course; and that it is high time to think of returning: it *must be* from proper convictions, he says, that a person who has lived too gay a life, resolves to reclaim, before age or sufferings come upon him.

All generous spirits, he observes, hate compulsion. Upon this observation he dwells; but regrets, that he is likely to owe all his hopes to this compulsion; this *injudicious* compulsion, he justly calls it; and none to my esteem for him. Although he presumes upon some merit—In his implicit regard to my will—In the bearing the daily indignities offered not only to him, but to his relations, by my brother—In the nightly watchings, and risques which he runs, in all weathers; and which his present indisposition makes him mention, or he had not debased the nobleness of his passion for me, by such a selfish instance.

I cannot but say, I am sorry the man is not well.

I am afraid to ask you, my dear, what

* Mr. Lovelace accounts for this, Vol. I, Letter XXXV.

you would have done, thus situated. But what I *have* done, I *have* done. In a word, I wrote, That I would, if possible, give him a meeting to-morrow night, between the hours of nine and twelve, by the ivy summer-house, or in it, or near the great cascade, at the bottom of the garden; and would unbolt the door, that he might come in by his own key. But that, if I found the meeting impracticable, or should change my mind, I would signify as much by another line; which he must wait for until it were dark.

TUESDAY, ELEVEN O'CLOCK.

I AM just returned from depositing my billet. How diligent is this man! It is plain he was in waiting: for I had walked but a few paces, after I had deposited it, when, my heart misgiving me, I returned, to have taken it back, in order to reconsider it as I walked, and whether I should, or should not, let it go. But I found it gone.

In all probability, there was but a brick-wall, of a few inches thick, between Mr. Lovelace and me, at the very time I put the letter under the brick.

I am come back dissatisfied with myself. But I think, my dear, there can be no harm in meeting him. If I do *not*, he may take some violent measures. What he knows of the treatment I meet with in malice to him, and with the view to frustrate all his hopes, may make him desperate. His behaviour last time I saw him, under the disadvantages of time and place, and surprized as I was, gives me no apprehension of any-thing but discovery. What he requires is not unreasonable, and cannot affect my future choice and determination: it is only to assure him from my own lips, that I never will be the wife of a man I hate. If I have not an opportunity to meet without hazard or detection, he must once more bear the disappointment. All his trouble, and mine too, is owing to his faulty character. This, although I hate tyranny and arrogance in all shapes, makes me think less of the risques he runs, and the fatigues he undergoes, than otherwise I should do; and still less, as my sufferings (derived from the same source) are greater than his.

Betty confirms the intimation, that I must go to my uncle's on Thursday. She was sent on purpose to direct me to prepare myself for going, and to help me to get every-thing up in order for my removal.

LETTER XVIII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

TUESDAY, THREE O'CLOCK, MARCH 28.

I Have mentioned several times the pertness of Mrs. Betty to me; and now, having a little time upon my hands, I will give you a short dialogue that passed just now between us. It may, perhaps, be a little relief to you from the dull subjects with which I am perpetually teazing you.

As she attended me at dinner, she took notice, That nature is satisfied with a very little nourishment: and thus she complimentally proved it—'For, 'Miss,' said she, 'you eat nothing; yet 'never looked more charmingly in your 'life.'

'As to the former part of your speech, 'Betty,' said I, 'you observe well; 'and I have often thought, when I 'have seen how healthy the children of 'the labouring poor *look*, and *are*, with 'empty stomachs, and hardly a good 'meal in a week, that God Almighty 'is very kind to his creatures, in this 'respect, as well as in all others, in 'making *much* not necessary to the sup'port of life; when three parts in four 'of his creatures, if it were, would not 'know how to obtain it. It puts me 'in mind of two proverbial sentences, 'which are full of admirable mean'ing.'

'What, pray, Miss, are they? I love 'to hear you talk, when you are so se'date as you seem now to be.'

'The one is to the purpose we are 'speaking of; *Poverty is the mother of 'health:* and let me tell you, Betty, if 'I had a better appetite, and were to 'encourage it, with so little rest, and 'so much distress and persecution, I 'don't think I should be able to pre'serve my reason.'

'*There's no inconvenience but has it's 'convenience*,' said Betty, giving me proverb for proverb. 'But what is the 'other, Madam?'

'That the *pleasures of the mighty are 'obtained by the tears of the poor:* it is 'but

'but reasonable, therefore, methinks, 'that the plenty of the one should be 'followed by distempers; and that the 'indigence of the other should be at-'tended with that health, which makes 'all it's other discomforts light on the 'comparison. And hence a third pro-'verb, Betty, since you are an admirer 'of proverbs; *Better a bare foot than 'none at all*; that is to say, than not to 'be able to walk.'

She was mightily taken with what I said: 'See,' returned she, 'what a fine 'thing scholarship is!—I,' said she, 'had always, from a girl, a taste for 'reading, though it were but in *Mother 'Goose*, and concerning the *Fairies*.' [And then she took genteelly a pinch of snuff.] 'Could but my parents *have 'let go as fast as I pulled*, I should have 'been a very happy creature.'

'Very likely, you would have made 'great improvements, Betty: but as it 'is, I cannot say, but since I had the 'favour of your attendance in this *in-'timate* manner, I have heard smarter 'things from you, than I have heard 'at table from some of my brother's 'fellow-collegians.'

'Your servant, dear Miss;' dropping me one of her best curtseys: 'so fine a 'judge as you are!—It is enough to make 'one very proud.' Then, with another pinch—'I cannot indeed but say,' bridling upon it, 'that I have heard fa-'mous scholars often and often say 'very silly things: things I should be 'ashamed myself to say—But I thought 'they did it out of humility, and in 'condescension to those who had not 'their learning.'

That she might not be too proud, I told her, I would observe, that the live-liness or quickness she so happily dis-covered in herself, was not so much an honour to her, as what she owed to her *sex*; which, as I had observed in many instances, had great advantages over the other, in all the powers that related to imagination: 'And hence, Mrs. Betty, 'you'll take notice, as I have of late 'had opportunity to do, that your own 'talent at repartee and smartness, when 'it has *something to work upon*, displays 'itself to more advantage, than could 'well be expected from one whose 'friends, to speak in your own phrase, 'could not *let go so fast as you pulled*.'

The wench gave me a proof of the truth of my observation, in a manner still more alert than I had expected: 'If,' said she, 'our sex had so much 'advantage in *smartness*, it is the less 'to be wondered at, that *you*, Miss, who 'have had such an education, should 'outdo all the men, and *women* too, 'that come near you.'

'Bless me, Betty,' said I, 'what a 'proof do you give me of your wit and 'your courage at the same time! This 'is outdoing yourself. It would make 'young ladies less proud, and more ap-'prehensive, were they generally at-'tended by such smart servants, and 'their mouths permitted to be unlocked 'upon them as yours has been lately 'upon me.—But, take away, Mrs. 'Betty.'

'Why, Miss, you have eat nothing 'at all—I hope you are not displeased 'with your dinner for any-thing I have 'said.'

'No, Mrs. Betty, I am pretty well 'used to your freedoms now, you 'know.—I am not displeased in the 'main, to observe, that, were the suc-'cession of modern fine ladies to be ex-'tinct, it might be supplied from those 'whom they place in the next rank to 'themselves, their chambermaids and 'confidantes. Your young mistress has 'contributed a great deal to this quick-'ness of yours. She always preferred 'your company to mine. As *you pulled*, 'she let go; and so, Mrs. Betty, you 'have gained by *her* conversation what 'I have lost.'

'Why, Miss, if you come to that, 'nobody says better things than Miss 'Harlowe. I could tell you one, if *I 'pleased*, upon my observing to her, 'that you lived of late upon the air, 'and had no stomach to any-thing; yet 'looked as charmingly as ever.'

'I dare say, it was a very good-na-'tured one, Mrs. Betty! Do you then 'please that I shall hear it?'

'Only this, Miss, *That your stomach-'fulness had swallowed up your stomach*; 'and, *That obstinacy was meat, drink, 'and cloth to you*.'

'Aye, Mrs. Betty; and *did* she say 'this?—I hope she laughed when she 'said it, as she does at all her *good 'things*, as she calls them. It was very 'smart, and very witty. I wish my 'mind were so much at ease, as to aim 'at being witty too. But if you admire 'such sententious sayings, I'll help 'you to another; and that is, *Encou-*

'*ragement*

'*ragement and approbation make people shew talents they were never suspected to have*; and this will do both 'for mistress and maid: and another 'I'll furnish you with, the contrary of 'the former, that will do only for me; 'That *persecution and discouragement depress* ingenuous *minds, and blunt the edge of lively imaginations*.—And 'hence may *my sister's* brilliancy and '*my* stupidity be both accounted for. '*Ingenuous*, you must know, Mrs. Betty, and *ingenious*, are two things; and 'I would not arrogate the latter to myself.'

'Lord, Miss,' said the foolish, 'you 'know a great deal for your years.—'You are a very learned young lady!—'What pity ——'

'None of your *pities*, Mrs. Betty. I 'know what you'd say. But tell me, 'if you can, Is it resolved that I shall 'be carried to my uncle Antony's on 'Thursday?'

I was willing to reward myself for the patience she had made me exercise, by getting at what intelligence I could from her.

'Why, Miss,' seating herself at a little distance, ('Excuse my sitting down,') with the snuff-box tapped very smartly, the lid opened, and a pinch taken with a dainty finger and thumb, the other three fingers distendedly bent, and with a fine flourish—'I cannot but say, that 'it is my opinion, you will certainly go 'on Thursday; and this *noless, foless*, 'as I have heard my young lady say in 'FRENCH.'

'Whether I am *willing* or *not willing*, 'you mean, I suppose, Mrs. Betty?'

'You have it, Miss.'

'Well, but, Betty, I have no mind 'to be turned out of doors so suddenly. 'Do you think I could not be permitted to tarry one week longer?'

'How can I tell, Miss!'

'O Mrs. Betty, you can tell a great 'deal, if *you please*. But here I am forbid writing to any one of my family; 'none of it now will come near *me*; 'nor will any of it permit me to see '*them*: how shall I do to make known 'my request, to stay here a week or 'fortnight longer?'

'Why, Miss, I fancy, if you were 'to shew a compliable temper, your 'friends would shew a compliable one 'too. But would you expect favours, 'and grant none?'

'Smartly put, Betty! But who knows 'what may be the result of my being 'carried to my uncle Antony's?'

'Who knows, Miss!—Why anybody will guess what may be the result.'

'As how, Betty?'

'*As how!*' repeated the pert wench, 'Why, Miss, you will stand in your 'own light, as you have hitherto done: 'and your parents, as such good parents *ought*, will be obeyed.'

'If, Mrs. Betty, I had not been 'used to your *oughts*, and to have my 'duty laid down to me by your oraculous wisdom, I should be apt to stare 'at the liberty of your speech.'

'You seem angry, Miss. I hope I 'take no unbecoming liberty.'

'If thou really think'st thou dost 'not, thy ignorance is more to be pitied, 'than thy pertness resented. I wish 'thou wouldst leave me to myself.'

'When young ladies fall out with 'their *own* duty, it is not much to be 'wondered at, that they are angry at 'any-body who do *theirs*.'

'That's a very pretty saying, Mrs. 'Betty!—I see plainly what *thy* duty 'is in *thy* notion, and am obliged to 'those who taught it thee.'

'Every-body takes notice, Miss, 'that you can say very cutting words 'in a cool manner, and yet not call 'names, as I have *known some* gentlefolks as well as others do when in a 'passion. But I wish you had permitted 'Squire Solmes to see you: he 'would have told you such stories of 'Squire Lovelace, as would have turned your heart against him for ever.'

'And know you any of the particulars of those sad stories?'

'Indeed I don't; but you'll hear all 'at your uncle Antony's, I suppose; 'and a great deal more perhaps than 'you will like to hear.'

'Let me hear what I will, I am determined against Mr. Solmes, were it 'to cost me my life.'

'If you are, Miss, the Lord have 'mercy on you! For what with this 'letter of yours to 'Squire Solmes, whom 'they so much value, and what with 'their antipathy to 'Squire Lovelace, 'whom they hate, they will have no 'patience with you.'

'What will they do, Betty? They 'won't kill me? What *will* they 'do?'

'Kill

'Kill you!—No!—But you will not 'be suffered to stir from thence, till you 'have complied with your duty. And 'no pen and ink will be allowed you as 'here; where they are of opinion you 'make no good use of it: nor would 'it be allowed here, only as they intend so soon to send you away to your 'uncle's. Nobody will be permitted 'to see you, or to correspond with 'you. What farther will be done, I 'can't say; and, if I could, it may 'not be proper. But you may prevent it all, by one word: and I wish 'you would, Miss. All then would 'be easy and happy. And, if I may 'speak my mind, I see not why one 'man is not as good as another: why, 'especially, a sober man is not as good 'as a rake.'

'Well, Betty,' said I, sighing, 'all 'thy impertinence goes for nothing. 'But I see I am destined to be a very 'unhappy creature. Yet I will venture upon one request more to them.'

And so, quite sick of the pert creature and of myself, I retired to my closet, and wrote a few lines to my uncle Harlowe, notwithstanding his prohibition; in order to get a reprieve from being carried away so soon as Thursday next, if I must go. And this, that I might, if complied with, suspend the appointment I have made with Mr. Lovelace; for my heart misgives me as to meeting him; and that more and more; I know not why. Under the superscription of the letter, I wrote these words. 'Pray, dear Sir, be 'pleased to give this a reading.'

This is the copy of what I wrote.

'TUESDAY AFTERNOON.

'HONOURED SIR,

'LET me this once be heard with 'patience, and have my petition 'granted. It is only, that I may not 'be hurried away so soon as next 'Thursday.

'Why should the poor girl be turned out of doors so suddenly, so disgracefully? Procure for me, Sir, one 'fortnight's respite. In that space of 'time, I hope you will all relent. My 'mamma shall not need to shut her 'door in apprehension of seeing her 'disgraced child. I will not presume 'to think of entering her presence, or 'my papa's, without leave. One fort'night's respite is but a *small favour* 'for them to grant, except I am to be 'refused every-thing I ask; but it is of 'the *highest import* to my peace of mind. 'Procure it for me, therefore, dear Sir; 'and you will exceedingly oblige *your* 'dutiful, *though greatly afflicted niece*,

'CL. HARLOWE.'

I sent this down: my uncle was not gone. And he now stays to know the result of the question put to me in the inclosed answer which he has given to mine.

'YOUR going to your uncle's was 'absolutely concluded upon for 'next Thursday. Nevertheless, your 'mother, seconded by Mr. Solmes, 'pleaded so strongly to have you indulged, that your request for a delay 'will be complied with, upon one condition; and whether for a fortnight, 'or a shorter time, that will depend 'upon yourself. If you refuse this 'condition, your mother declares, she 'will give over all further intercession 'for you.—Nor do you deserve this favour, as you put it upon our yielding to you, not you to us.

'This condition is, That you admit 'of a visit from Mr. Solmes, for one 'hour, in company of your brother, 'your sister, or your uncle Antony, 'chuse which you will.

'If you comply not, you go next 'Thursday to a house which is become 'strangely odious to you of late, whether you get ready to go or not. Answer therefore directly to the point. 'No evasion. Name your day and 'hour. Mr. Solmes will neither eat 'you, nor drink you. Let us see, 'whether *we* are to be complied with 'in *any-thing*, or not.

'JOHN HARLOWE.'

After a very little deliberation, I resolved to comply with this condition. All I fear is, that Mr. Lovelace's intelligencer may inform him of it; and that his apprehensions upon it may make him take some desperate resolution: especially as now (having more time given me here) I think to write to him to suspend the interview he is possibly so sure

sure of. I sent down the following to my uncle.

'HONOURED SIR,

'ALTHOUGH I see not what 'end the proposed condition can 'answer, I comply with it. I wish I 'could with every-thing expected of 'me. If I must name one, in whose 'company I am to see the gentleman, 'and that one *not* my mamma, whose 'presence I could wish to be honoured 'by on the occasion, let my uncle, if 'he pleases, be the *person*. If I must 'name the *day*, (a long day, I doubt, 'will not be permitted me) let it be 'next Tuesday. The *hour*, four in 'the afternoon. The *place*, either the 'ivy summer-house, or in the little 'parlour I used to be permitted to call 'mine.

'Be pleased, Sir, nevertheless, to 'prevail upon my mamma to vouch-'safe me her presence on the occasion. 'I am, Sir, *your ever-dutiful*

'CL. HARLOWE.'

A reply is just sent me. I thought it became my averseness to this meeting, to name a distant day: but I did not expect they would have complied with it. So here is one week gained! This is the reply.

'YOU have done well to comply. 'We are willing to think the best 'of every slight instance of duty from 'you. Yet have you seemed to consi-'der the day as an evil day, and so put 'it far off. This nevertheless is 'granted you, as no time need to be 'lost, if you are as generous *after* the 'day, as we are condescending *before* 'it. Let me advise you, not to harden 'your mind; nor take up your resolu-'tion beforehand. Mr. Solmes has 'more awe, and even terror, at the 'thoughts of seeing you, than you can 'have at the thoughts of seeing him. '*His* motive is *love*; let not *yours* be '*hatred*. My brother Antony will be 'present, in hopes you will deserve 'well of *him*, by behaving well to the 'friend of the family. See you use 'him as such. Your mother had per-'mission to be there, if she thought fit: 'but says, she would not for a thou-'sand pounds, unless you would en-'courage her beforehand as she wishes 'to be encouraged. One hint I am to 'give you mean time. It is this: *to 'make a discreet use of your pen and 'ink*. Methinks a young creature of 'niceness should be less ready to write 'to one man, when she is designed to 'be another's.

'This compliance, I hope, will 'produce greater; and then the peace 'of the family will be restored: which 'is what is heartily wished by *your 'loving uncle*,

'JOHN HARLOWE.

'Unless it be to the purpose our 'hearts are set upon, you need 'not write again.'

This man have *more terror at seeing me, than I can have at seeing him!*—How can that be? If he had half as much, he would not wish to see me!—His *motive love!*—Yes indeed! Love of himself! He knows no other; for love, that deserves the name, seeks the satisfaction of the beloved object more than it's own.—Weighed in this scale, what a profanation is this man guilty of!

Not to take up my resolution beforehand!—That advice comes too late.

But I must *make a discreet use of my pen*. That, I doubt, as they have managed it, in the sense they mean it, is as much out of my power, as the other.

But *to write to one man, when I am designed for another!*—What a shocking expression is that!

Repenting of my appointment with Mr. Lovelace *before* I had this favour granted me, you may believe I hesitated not a moment to revoke it *now* that I had gained such a respite. Accordingly, I wrote, That I found it inconvenient to meet him, as I had intended: that the risque I should run of a discovery, and the mischiefs that might flow from it, could not be justified by any end that such a meeting could answer; that I found one certain servant more in my way, when I took my morning and evening airings, than any other; that the person who might reveal the secrets of a family to *him*, might, if opportunity were given him, betray me, or him, to those whom it was his duty to serve; that I had not been used to a conduct so faulty, as to lay myself at

the mercy of ſervants; and was ſorry he had meaſures to purſue, that made ſteps neceſſary in his own opinion, which, in mine, were very culpable, and which no end could juſtify; that things drawing towards a criſis between my friends and me, an interview could avail nothing; eſpecially as the method by which this correſpondence was carried on, was not ſuſpected, and he could write all that was in his mind to write; that I expected to be at liberty to judge of what was proper and fit upon this occaſion; eſpecially as he might be aſſured, that I would ſooner chuſe death, than Mr. Solmes.

TUESDAY NIGHT.

I HAVE depoſited my letter to Mr. Lovelace. Threatening as things look againſt me, I am much better pleaſed with myſelf for declining the interview than I was before. I ſuppoſe he will be a little out of humour upon it, however: but as I reſerved to myſelf the liberty of changing my mind; and as it is eaſy for him to imagine there may be reaſons for it *within-doors*, which he cannot judge of *without*; beſides thoſe I have ſuggeſted, which of themſelves are of ſufficient weight to engage his acquieſcence; I ſhould think it ſtrange, if he acquieſces not on this occaſion, and that with a chearfulneſs, which may ſhew me, that his laſt letter is written from his heart: for if he be really ſo much concerned at his paſt faults, as he pretends, and has for ſome time pretended, muſt he not, of courſe, have corrected, in ſome degree, the impetuoſity of his temper? The firſt ſtep to reformation, as I conceive, is to ſubdue ſudden guſts of paſſion, from which frequently the greateſt evils ariſe, and to learn to bear diſappointments. If the iraſcible paſſions cannot be overcome, what opinion can we have of the perſon's power over thoſe to which bad habit, joined to *greater* temptation, gives ſtronger force?

Pray, my dear, be ſo kind, as to make enquiry by ſome ſafe hand, after the diſguiſes Mr. Lovelace aſſumes at the inn he puts up at in the poor village of *Neale*, he calls it. If it be the ſame I take it to be, I never knew it was conſiderable enough to have a name; nor that it has an inn in it.

As he muſt, to be ſo conſtantly near us, be much there, I would be glad to have ſome account of his behaviour; and what the people think of him. In ſuch a length of time, he muſt by his conduct either give ſcandal, or hope of reformation. Pray, my dear, humour me in this enquiry. I have reaſons for it, which you ſhall be acquainted with another time, if the reſult of the enquiry diſcover them not.

LETTER XIX.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, NINE O'CLOCK.

I AM juſt returned from my morning walk, and already have received a letter from Mr. Lovelace in anſwer to mine depoſited laſt night. He muſt have had pen, ink, and paper with him; for it was written in the coppice; with this circumſtance: 'On one knee, kneel-'ing with the other.' *Not* from reverence to the written to, however, as you'll find!

Well we are inſtructed early to keep theſe men at diſtance. An undeſigning open heart, where it is loth to diſoblige, is eaſily drawn in, I ſee, to oblige more than ever it deſigned. It is too apt to govern itſelf by what a bold ſpirit is encouraged to *expect* of it. It is very difficult for a good-natured young perſon to give a negative where it diſeſteems not.

Our hearts may harden and contract, as we gain experience, and when we have ſmarted perhaps for our eaſy folly: and ſo they *ought*, or we ſhould be upon very unequal terms with the world.

Excuſe theſe grave reflections. This man has vexed me heartily. I ſee his gentleneſs was *art*: fierceneſs, and a temper like what I have been too much uſed to at home, are *nature* in him. Nothing, I think, ſhall ever make me forgive him; for ſurely, there can be no good reaſon for his impatience on an expectation given with reſerve, and revocable.—*I* ſo much to ſuffer *through* him; yet, to be treated as if I were obliged to bear inſults *from* him!

But here you will be pleaſed to read his letter; which I ſhall incloſe.

TO

'TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

'GOOD GOD!

'WHAT is *now* to become of me! '—How ſhall I ſupport this 'diſappointment!—No new cauſe!—'On one knee, kneeling with the 'other, I write!—My feet benumbed 'with midnight wanderings through 'the heavieſt dews that ever fell: my 'wig and my linen dripping with the 'hoar froſt diſſolving on them!—Day 'but juſt breaking—Sun not riſen to 'exhale—May it never riſe again!—'Unleſs it bring healing and comfort 'to a benighted ſoul! In proportion to 'the joy you had inſpired (ever lovely 'promiſer!) in ſuch proportion is my 'anguiſh!

'O my beloved creature!—But are 'not your very excuſes confeſſions of 'excuſes inexcuſable? I know not 'what I write!—*That* ſervant in your 'way*! By the great God of Heaven, 'that ſervant *was not, dared not, could not* be in your way!—Curſe upon the cool caution that is pleaded to 'deprive me of an expectation ſo tranſporting!

'And *are things drawing towards a criſis between your friends and you?* '—Is not this a reaſon for me to expect, the *rather* to expect, the promiſed interview?

'CAN *I write all that is in my mind*, 'ſay you?—Impoſſible!—Not the hundredth part of what is in my mind, and 'in my apprehenſion, can I write!

'O the wavering, the changeable 'ſex!—But can Miſs Clariſſa Harlowe—

'Forgive me, Madam!—I know not 'what I write!

'Yet I muſt, I do, inſiſt upon your 'promiſe—Or that you will condeſcend to find better excuſes for the 'failure—Or convince me, that ſtronger reaſons are impoſed upon *you*, than 'thoſe you offer.—A promiſe *once* given (upon *deliberation* given) the *promiſed* only can diſpenſe with—except 'in caſes of a very apparent neceſſity 'impoſed upon the *promiſer*, which 'leaves no power to perform it.

'The firſt promiſe you ever made 'me! Life and death perhaps depending upon it—My heart deſponding 'from the barbarous methods reſolved 'to be taken with you in malice to me!

'*You would ſooner chuſe death than Solmes!* (How my ſoul ſpurns the competition!) O my beloved creature, what are theſe but *words?*—'*Whoſe* words?—Sweet and ever-adorable—What?—Promiſe-breaker—'muſt I call you?—How ſhall I believe 'the aſſeveration (your *ſuppoſed duty* 'in the queſtion! Perſecution ſo flaming! Hatred to me ſo ſtrongly avowed!) after this inſtance of your ſo 'lightly diſpenſing with your promiſe?

'If, my deareſt life! you would prevent my diſtraction, or, at leaſt, diſtracted conſequences, renew the promiſed hope!—My *fate* is indeed upon it's criſis.

'Forgive me, deareſt creature, forgive me!—I know I have written in 'too much anguiſh of mind!—Writing this, in the ſame moment that the 'juſt dawning light has imparted to 'me the heavy diſappointment.

'I dare not re-peruſe what I have 'written.—I *muſt* depoſit it—It may 'ſerve to ſhew you my diſtracted apprehenſion that this diſappointment is 'but a prelude to the greateſt of all.—'Nor, having here any other paper, 'am I able to write again if I would 'on this gloomy ſpot—(Gloomy is my 'ſoul; and all nature round me partakes of my gloom!) I truſt it 'therefore to your goodneſs—If it's 'fervor excite your diſpleaſure rather 'than your pity, you wrong my paſſion; and I ſhall be ready to apprehend, that I am intended to be the ſacrifice of more miſcreants than one! '[Have patience with me, deareſt creature!—I mean Solmes and your brother only.] But if, exerting your 'uſual generoſity, you will excuſe and '*re-appoint*, may that God, whom you 'profeſs to ſerve, and who is the God 'of *truth* and of *promiſes*, protect and 'bleſs you, for both; and for reſtoring 'to himſelf, and to hope, *your ever-adoring, yet almoſt deſponding*

'LOVELACE!

'IVY-CAVERN, IN THE 'COPPICE—DAY BUT 'JUST BREAKING.'

* See Page 199.

This is the anſwer I ſhall return.

'WEDNESDAY MORNING.

'I Am amazed, Sir, at the freedom of 'your reproaches. Preſſed and 'teazed, againſt convenience and in-'clination, to give you a private meet-'ing, am *I* to be thus challenged and 'upbraided, and my ſex reflected up-'on, becauſe I thought it prudent to 'change my mind?—A liberty I had 'reſerved to myſelf, when I made the '*appointment*, as you call it. I want-'ed not inſtances of your impatient 'ſpirit to other people: yet may it be 'happy for me, that I have this new 'one; which ſhews, that you can as 'little ſpare *me*, when I purſue the dic-'tates of my own reaſon, as you do '*others*, for acting up to theirs. Two 'motives you muſt be governed by in 'this exceſs. The one *my eaſineſs*; 'the other *your own preſumption*. 'Since you think you have found out 'the *firſt*, and have ſhewn ſo much of 'the *laſt* upon it, I am too much 'alarmed, not to wiſh and deſire, that 'your letter of this day may conclude 'all the trouble you had from, or for,

'*your humble ſervant*,

'CL. HARLOWE.'

I believe, my dear, I may promiſe myſelf your approbation, whenever I write or ſpeak with ſpirit, be it to whom it will. Indeed, I find but too much reaſon to exert it, ſince I have to deal with people, who govern themſelves in their conduct to me, not by what is fit or decent, right or wrong, but by what they think my temper will bear. I have, till very lately, been praiſed for mine; but it has always been by thoſe who never gave me opportunity to return the compliment to them. Some people have acted, as if they thought forbearance on *one ſide* abſolutely neceſſary for them and me to be upon good terms together; and in this caſe have ever taken care rather to *owe* that obligation than to *lay* it. You have hinted to me, that reſentment is not natural to my temper, and that therefore it muſt ſoon ſubſide: it may be ſo with reſpect to my relations; but not to Mr. Lovelace, I aſſure you.

WEDNESDAY NOON, MARCH 29.

We cannot always anſwer for what we *can* do: but to convince you, that I can keep my above reſolution, with regard to Mr. Lovelace, angry as my letter is, and three hours as it is ſince it was written, I aſſure you, that I repent it not; nor will ſoften it, although I find it is not taken away. And yet I hardly ever before did any-thing in anger, that I did not repent in half an hour; and queſtion myſelf in *leſs* than that time, whether I were right or wrong.

In this reſpite till Tueſday, I have a little time to look about me, as I may ſay, and to conſider of what I *have* to do, and *can* do. And Mr. Lovelace's inſolence will make me go very home with myſelf. Not that I think I can conquer my averſion to Mr. Solmes, I am ſure I cannot. But, if I abſolutely break with Mr. Lovelace, and give my friends convincing proofs of it, who knows but they will reſtore me to their favour, and let their views in relation to the other man go off by degrees?—Or, at leaſt, that I may be ſafe till my couſin Morden arrives: to whom, I think, I will write; and the rather, as Mr. Lovelace has aſſured me, that my friends have written to him to make good their ſide of the queſtion.

But, with all my courage, I am exceedingly apprehenſive about the Tueſday next, and about what may reſult from my ſtedfaſtneſs; for ſtedfaſt I am ſure I ſhall be. They are reſolved, I am told, to try every means to induce me to comply with what they are determined upon. And I am reſolved to do all I can to avoid what they would force me to do. A dreadful contention between parents and child!—Each hoping to leave the other without excuſe, whatever the conſequence may be.

What can I do? Adviſe me, my dear. Something is ſtrangely wrong ſomewhere! to make parents, the moſt indulgent till now, ſeem cruel in a child's eye; and a daughter, till within theſe few weeks, thought unexceptionably dutiful, appear, in their judgment, a rebel!—O my ambitious and violent brother! What may he have to anſwer for to both!

Be

Be pleaſed to remember, my dear, that your laſt favour was dated on Saturday. This is Wedneſday: and none of mine have been taken away ſince. Don't let me want *your* advice. My ſituation is extremely difficult.—But I am ſure you love me ſtill: and not the leſs on *that* account. Adieu, my beloved friend.

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER XX.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

THURSDAY MORNING, DAY BREAK, MARCH 30.

AN accident, and not remiſſneſs, has occaſioned my ſilence.

My mother was ſent for on Sunday night by her couſin Larkin, whom I mentioned in one of my former, and who was extremely earneſt to ſee her.

This poor woman was always afraid of death, and was one of thoſe weak perſons who imagine that the making of their will muſt be an undoubted forerunner of it.

She had always ſaid, when urged to the neceſſary work, That whenever ſhe made it, ſhe ſhould not live long after; and, one would think, imagined ſhe was under an obligation to prove her words: for, though ſhe had been long bed-rid, and was, in a manner, worn out before, yet ſhe thought herſelf better, till ſhe was perſuaded to make it: and from that moment, remembering what ſhe uſed to prognoſticate, (her *fears helping on what ſhe feared*, as is often the caſe, particularly in the ſmall-pox) grew worſe; and had it in her head once to burn her will, in hopes to grow better upon it.

She ſent my mother word, that the doctors had given her over: but that ſhe could not die till ſhe ſaw her. I told my mother, that if ſhe wiſhed her a chance for recovery, ſhe ſhould not, for *that* reaſon, go. But go ſhe would; and, what was worſe, would make me go with her; and that, at an hour's warning; for ſhe ſaid nothing of it to me, till ſhe was riſing in the morning *early*, reſolving to return *at night*. Had there been more time for argumentation, to be ſure I had not gone; but as it was, there was a kind of neceſſity that my preparation to obey her, ſhould, in a manner, accompany her command.—A command ſo much out of the way, on ſuch a ſolemn occaſion! And this I repreſented; but to no purpoſe: there never was ſuch a contradicting girl in the world—*My* wiſdom always made *her* a fool!—But ſhe *would* be obliged *this time*, proper or improper.

I have but one way of accounting for this ſudden whim of my mother; and that is this—She had a mind to accept of Mr. Hickman's offer to eſcort her—And I verily believe [I wiſh I were quite ſure of it] had a mind to oblige him with *my* company—As far as I know, to keep me out of *worſe*.

For, would you believe it?—As ſure as you are alive, ſhe is afraid for her favourite Hickman, becauſe of the long viſit your Lovelace, though ſo much by accident, made me in her abſence, laſt time ſhe was at the ſame place. I hope, my dear, *you* are not jealous too. But indeed I now-and-then, when ſhe teazes me with praiſes which Hickman cannot deſerve, in return fall to praiſing thoſe qualities and perſonalities in Lovelace, which the other never will have. Indeed I do love to teaze a little bit, that I do.—My mamma's girl—I had like to have ſaid.

As you know ſhe is as paſſionate, as I am pert, you will not wonder to be told, that we generally fall out on theſe occaſions. She flies from me at the long run. It would be undutiful in me to leave her *firſt*—And then I get an opportunity to purſue our *correſpondence*.

For, now I am rambling, let me tell you, that ſhe does not much favour *that*;—for *two* reaſons, I believe:—one, that I don't ſhew her all that paſſes between us; the other, that ſhe thinks I harden your mind againſt your *duty*, as it is called. And with *her*, for a reaſon at *home*, as I have hinted more than once, parents cannot do wrong; children cannot oppoſe, and be right. This obliges me now-and-then to *ſteal* an hour, as I may ſay, and not let her know how I am employed.

You may gueſs from what I have written, how averſe I was to comply with this unreaſonable ſtretch of motherly authority—But it came to be a

teſt

teſt of duty; ſo I was obliged to yield, though with a full perſuaſion of being in the right.

I have always your reproofs upon theſe occaſions: in your late letters ſtronger than ever. A good reaſon why, you'll ſay, becauſe more deſerved than ever. I thank you kindly for your correction. I hope to make *correction* of it—But let me tell you, that your ſtripes, whether deſerved or not, have made me ſenſible deeper than the ſkin—But of this another time.

It was Monday afternoon before we reached the old lady's houſe. That fiddling, parading fellow [you know who I mean] made us wait for him two hours, and I to go a journey I diſliked! only for the ſake of having a little more tawdry upon his houſings; which he had hurried his ſaddler to put on, to make him look fine, being to eſcort his dear Madam Howe, and her fair daughter. I told him, that I ſuppoſed he was afraid, that the double ſolemnity in the caſe (that of the viſit to a dying woman, and that of his own countenance) would give him the appearance of an *undertaker*; to avoid which, he ran into as bad an extreme, and I doubted would be taken for a *mountebank*.

The man was confounded. He took it as ſtrongly, as if his conſcience gave aſſent to the juſtice of the remark: otherwiſe he would have borne it better; for he is uſed enough to this ſort of treatment. I thought he would have cried. I have heretofore obſerved, that on *this* ſide of the contract, he ſeems to be a mighty meek ſort of creature.—And though I ſhould like it in him *hereafter* perhaps, yet I can't help deſpiſing him a little in my heart for it *now*. I believe, my dear, we all love your bluſtering fellows beſt; could we but direct the bluſter, and bid it roar when, and at whom we pleaſed.

The poor man looked at my mother. She was ſo angry, (my airs upon it, and my oppoſition to the journey, have all helped) that for half the way ſhe would not ſpeak to me. And when ſhe did, it was, 'I wiſh I had not 'brought you! You know not what it 'is to condeſcend. It is *my* fault, not 'Mr. *Hickman's*, that you are here ſo 'much againſt your will. Have you 'no eyes for this ſide of the chariot?'

And then he fared the better from *her*, as he always does, for faring worſe from *me*: for there was, 'How 'do you *now*, Sir?' And 'How do 'you *now*, Mr. Hickman?' as he ambled now on this ſide of the chariot, now on that, ſtealing a prim look at me; *her* head half out of the chariot, kindly ſmiling as if married to the man but a fortnight herſelf; while I always ſaw ſomething to divert myſelf on the ſide of the chariot where the honeſt man was not, were it but old Robin at a diſtance, on his Roan Keffel.

Our courtſhip days, they ſay, are our beſt days. Favour deſtroys courtſhip. Diſtance increaſes it. It's eſſence is diſtance. And to ſee how familiar theſe men wretches grow upon a ſmile, what an awe they are ſtruck into when we frown; who would not make them ſtand off? Who would not enjoy a power, that is to be ſo ſhort-lived?

Don't chide me one bit for this, my dear. It is in nature. I can't help it. Nay, for that matter, I love it, and wiſh not to help it. So ſpare your gravity, I beſeech you, on this ſubject. I ſet not up for a perfect character. The man will bear it. And what need *you* care? My mother overbalances all he ſuffers: and if he thinks himſelf unhappy, he ought never to be otherwiſe.

Then did he not deſerve a fit of the ſullens, think you, to make us loſe our dinner for his parade, ſince in ſo ſhort a journey my mother would not 'bate, and loſe the opportunity of coming back that night, had the old lady's condition permitted it? To ſay nothing of being the cauſe, that my mamma was in the glout with her poor daughter all the way.

At our alighting I gave him another dab; but it was but a little one. Yet the manner, and the air, made up (as I intended they ſhould) for that defect. My mother's hand was kindly put into his, and with a ſimpering altogether bridal; and with another 'How do you now, 'Sir?'—All his plump muſcles were in motion, and a double charge of care and obſequiouſneſs fidgetted up his whole form, when he offered to me his officious palm. My mother, when I was a girl, always bid me hold up my head. I juſt then remembered her commands, and was dutiful—I never held up my head ſo high. With an averted ſupercilious eye, and a rejecting hand, half-flouriſhing—'I have

'no

'no need of help, Sir!—You are in 'my way.'

He ran back, as if on wheels; with a face exceſſively mortified: I had thoughts elſe to have followed the too gentle touch, with a declaration, that I had as many hands and feet as himſelf. But this would have been telling him a piece of news, as to the latter, that I hope he had not the preſumption to gueſs at.

* *

We found the poor woman, as we thought, at the laſt gaſp. Had we come *ſooner*, we could not have got away, as we intended, that night. You ſee I am for excuſing the man all I can; and yet, I aſſure you, I have not ſo much as a *conditional liking* to him. My mother ſat up moſt part of the night, expecting every hour would have been her poor couſin's laſt. I bore her company till two.

I never ſaw the approaches of death in a grown perſon before; and was extremely ſhocked. Death, to one in health, is a very terrible thing. We pity the perſon for what *ſhe* ſuffers: and we pity ourſelves for what *we* muſt ſome time hence in like ſort ſuffer; and ſo are *doubly* affected.

She held out till *Tueſday* morning, eleven. As ſhe had told my mother that ſhe had left her an executrix, and her and me rings and mourning; we were employed all that day in matters of the will; [by which, by the way, my couſin Jenny Fynnett is handſomely provided for] ſo that it was Wedneſday morning early, before we could ſet out on our return.

It is true, we got home (having no houſings to ſtay for) by noon: but though I ſent Robin away before he diſmounted, (who brought me back a whole packet, down to the ſame Wedneſday noon) yet was I really ſo fatigued, and ſhocked, as I muſt own, at the hard death of the old lady; my mother likewiſe (who has no reaſon to diſlike this world) being indiſpoſed from the ſame occaſion; that I could not ſet about writing time enough for Robin's return that night.

But having recruited my ſpirits, my mother having alſo had a good night, I aroſe with the dawn to write this, and get it diſpatched time enough for your breakfaſt-airing; that your ſuſpenſe might be as ſhort as poſſible.

* *

I will ſoon follow this with another. I will employ a perſon directly to find out how Lovelace behaves himſelf at his inn. Such a buſy ſpirit muſt be traceable.

But, perhaps, my dear, you are indifferent *now* about him, or his employments; for this requeſt was made before he *mortally* offended you. Nevertheleſs, I will have enquiry made. The reſult, it is very probable, will be of uſe to confirm you in your preſent unforgiving temper.—And yet, if the *poor* man [ſhall I pity him for *you*, my dear?] ſhould be deprived of the greateſt bleſſing any man on earth can receive, and to which he has the preſumption, with ſo little merit, to aſpire; he will have run great riſques; caught great colds; hazarded fevers; ſuſtained the higheſt indignities; braved the inclemencies of ſkies, and all for—*nothing!* —Will not this move your *generoſity* (if nothing elſe) in his favour!—Poor Mr. Lovelace!

I would occaſion no throb; nor half-throb; no flaſh of ſenſibility, like lightning darting in, and as ſoon ſuppreſſed by a diſcretion that no one of the ſex ever before could give ſuch an example of—I *would not*, I ſay; and yet, for a trial of *you* to *yourſelf*, rather than as an impertinent overflow of raillery in your friend, as money-takers try a ſuſpected guinea by the *ſound*, let me, on ſuch a ſuppoſition, ſound *you*, by repeating, '*Poor Mr. Lovelace!*'—

And now, my dear, how is it with you? How do you now, as my mother ſays to Mr. Hickman, when her pert daughter has made him look ſorrowful?

LETTER XXI.

MR. HICKMAN, TO MRS. HOWE.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29.

MADAM,

It is with infinite regret that I think myſelf obliged, by pen and ink, to repeat my apprehenſions, that it is impoſſible for me ever to obtain a ſhare in the affections of your beloved daughter. O that it were not too evident to every-one, as well as to myſelf, even to our very ſervants, that my love for her, and my aſſiduities, expoſe me rather

ther to her ſcorn [Forgive me, Madam, the hard word!] than to the treatment due to a man whoſe propoſals have met with your approbation, and who loves her above all the women in the world!

Well might the merit of my paſſion be doubted, if, like Mr. Solmes to the truly admirable Miſs Clariſſa Harlowe, I could continue my addreſſes to Miſs Howe's diſtaſte. Yet what will not the diſcontinuance coſt me!

Give me leave, nevertheleſs, deareſt, worthieſt lady, to repeat, what I told you, on Monday night, at Mrs. Larkin's, with a heart even burſting with grief, that I wanted not the treatment of that day to convince me, that I am not, nor even can be, the object of Miſs Howe's voluntary favour. What hopes can there be, that a lady will ever eſteem, as a huſband, the man, whom as a lover, ſhe deſpiſes? Will not every act of obligingneſs from ſuch a one, be conſtrued an unmanly tameneſs of ſpirit, and entitle him the more to her diſdain?—My heart is full: forgive me if I ſay, that Miſs Howe's treatment of me does no credit either to her education, or fine ſenſe.

Since then it is too evident, that ſhe cannot eſteem me; and ſince, as I have heard it juſtly obſerved by the excellent Miſs Clariſſa Harlowe, that love is not a voluntary paſſion; would it not be ungenerous to ſubject the dear daughter to the diſpleaſure of a mother ſo juſtly fond of her; and you, Madam, while you are ſo good as to intereſt yourſelf in my favour, to uneaſineſs? And why, were I to be even ſure, at laſt, of ſucceeding by means of your kind partiality to me, ſhould I wiſh to make the beſt-beloved of my ſoul unhappy; ſince mutual muſt be our happineſs, or miſery for life the conſequence to both?

My beſt wiſhes will for ever attend the dear, the ever-dear lady! May her nuptials be happy! They muſt be ſo, if ſhe marry the man ſhe can honour with her love. Yet I will ſay, that whoever be the happy, the thrice happy man, he never can love her with a paſſion more ardent and more ſincere than mine.

Accept, dear Madam, of my moſt grateful thanks for a diſtinction that has been the only ſupport of my preſumption in an addreſs I am obliged, as utterly hopeleſs, to diſcontinue. A diſtinction, on which (and not on my own merits) I had entirely relied; but which, I find can avail me nothing. To the laſt hour of my life, it will give me pleaſure to think, that had your favour, your recommendation, been of ſufficient weight to conquer what ſeems to be an invincible averſion, I had been the happieſt of men.

I am, dear Madam, with inviolable reſpect, *your ever obliged and faithful humble ſervant,*

CHARLES HICKMAN.

LETTER XXII.

MRS. HOWE, TO CHARLES HICKMAN, ESQ.

THURSDAY, MARCH 30.

I Cannot but ſay, Mr. Hickman, but you have cauſe to be diſſatisfied—to be out of humour—to be diſpleaſed—with Nancy—But, upon my word; but indeed—What ſhall I ſay?—Yet this I will ſay, that you *good* young gentlemen know nothing at all of our ſex. Shall I tell you—But why ſhould I? And yet I will ſay, that if Nancy did not think well of you in the main, ſhe is too generous to treat you ſo freely as ſhe does.—Don't you think ſhe has courage enough to tell me, ſhe would not ſee you, and to refuſe at any time ſeeing you, as ſhe knows on what account you come, if ſhe had not ſomething in her head favourable to you? Fie! that I am forced to ſay thus much in writing, when I have hinted it to you twenty and twenty times by word of mouth!

But if you are ſo indifferent, Mr. Hickman—If you think you can part with her for her ſkittiſh tricks—If *my* intereſt in your favour—Why, Mr. Hickman, I muſt tell you, that my Nancy is worth bearing with. If ſhe be *fooliſh*—what is that owing to?—Is it not to her *wit?* Let me tell you, Sir, you cannot have the convenience without the inconvenience. What workman loves not a ſharp tool to work with? But is there not more danger from a ſharp tool, than from a blunt one? And what workman will throw away a ſharp tool, becauſe it may cut his fingers? Wit may be likened to a ſharp tool. And there is ſomething very pretty

pretty in wit, let me tell you. Often and often have I been forced to ſmile at her arch turns upon me, when I could have beat her for them. And, pray, don't I bear a great deal from her?—And why? Becauſe I love her. And would you not wiſh me to judge of your love for her by my own? And would not you bear with her?—Don't you love her (what though with another ſort of love?) as well as I do? I do aſſure you, Sir, that if I thought you did not—Well, but it is plain that you don't!—And is it plain that you don't?—Well, then, you muſt do as you think beſt.

Well might the merit of your paſſion be doubted, you ſay, if, like Mr. Solmes—Fiddle-faddle!—Why, you are a captious man, I think!—Has Nancy been ſo plain in her repulſes of you as Miſs Clary Harlowe has been to Mr. Solmes?—Does Nancy love any man better than you, although ſhe may not ſhew ſo much love to you as you wiſh for?—If ſhe did, let me tell you, ſhe would have let us all hear of it.—What idle compariſons then!

But it may be you are tired out. It may be you have ſeen ſomebody elſe—It may be you would wiſh to change miſtreſſes with that gay wretch Mr. Lovelace. It may be too, that, in that caſe, Nancy would not be ſorry to change lovers—The *truly admirable* Miſs Clariſſa Harlowe! And the *excellent* Miſs Clariſſa Harlowe!—Good lack!—But take care, Mr. Hickman, that you do not praiſe any woman living, let her be as admirable and as excellent as ſhe will, above your own miſtreſs. No polite man will do that, ſurely. And take care too, that you do not make her or me think you are in earneſt in your anger—Juſt though it may be, as anger only—I would not for a thouſand pounds, that Nancy ſhould know that you can ſo eaſily part with her, if you have the love for her which you declare you have. Be ſure, if you are not abſolutely determined, that you do not ſo much as whiſper the contents of this your letter to your own heart, as I may ſay.

Her treatment of you, you ſay, does no credit either to her education or fine ſenſe. Very home put, truly! Nevertheleſs, ſo ſay I. But is not hers the diſgrace, more than yours? I can aſſure you, that every-body blames her for it. And *why* do they blame her?—Why? Becauſe they think you merit better treatment at her hands: and is not this to your credit? Who but pities *you*, and blames *her*? Do the ſervants, who, as you obſerve, ſee her ſkittiſh airs, diſreſpect you for them? Do they not, at ſuch times, look concerned for you? Are they not then doubly officious in their reſpects and ſervices to you? I have obſerved with pleaſure, that they are.

But you are afraid you ſhall be thought tame, perhaps, when married. That you ſhall not be thought *manly* enough, I warrant!—And this was poor Mr. Howe's fear. And many a tug did this lordly fear coſt us both, God knows!—Many more than needed, I am ſure:—and more than ought to have been, had he known how to *bear and forbear*, as is the duty of thoſe who pretend to have moſt ſenſe—And, pray, which would you have to have moſt ſenſe, the woman or the man?

Well, Sir, and now what remains, if you really love Nancy ſo well as you ſay you do?—Why, I leave that to you. You may, if you pleaſe, come to breakfaſt with me in the morning. But with no *full heart*, nor reſenting looks, I adviſe you; except you can brave it out. That have I, when provoked, done many a time with my *huſband*, but never did I get any thing by it with my *daughter*: much leſs will you. Of which, for your obſervation, I thought fit to advertiſe you. As from *your friend*,

ANNABELLA HOWE.

LETTER XXIII.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

THURSDAY MORNING.

I Will now take ſome notice of your laſt favour. But being ſo far behind-hand with you, muſt be brief.

In the firſt place, as to your reproofs, thus ſhall I diſcharge myſelf of that part of my ſubject. Is it likely, think you, that I ſhould avoid deſerving them now-and-then, occaſionally, when I admire the manner in which you give me your rebukes, and love you the better for them? And when you are ſo well

entitled to give them? For what fault can *you* possibly have, unless your relations are so kind as to find you a *fault* to keep their *many* in countenance?—But they are as kind to *me* in this, as to *you*; for I may venture to affirm, that any one who should read *your* letters, and would say you were *right*, would not on reading *mine* condemn me for being *quite wrong*.

Your resolution not to leave your father's house is right—if you can stay in it, and avoid being Solmes's wife.

I think you answered Solmes's letter, as *I* should have answered it—Will you not compliment me and yourself at once, by saying, that *that* was right?

You have, in your letters to your uncle and the rest, done all that you ought to do. You are wholly guiltless of the consequence, be it what it will. To offer to give up your estate!—That would not I have done! You see this offer staggered them: they took time to consider of it. They made my heart ache in the time they took. I was afraid they would have taken you at your word: and so but for shame, and for fear of Lovelace, I dare say they would. You are too noble for them. This, I repeat, is an offer *I* would not have made. Let me beg of you, my dear, never to repeat the temptation to them.

I freely own to you, that their usage of you upon it, and Lovelace's different treatment of you* in his last letter received at the same time, would have made *me* his, past redemption. The deuce take the man, I was going to say, for not having had so much regard to his character and morals, as would have entirely justified such a step in a CLARISSA, persecuted as she is!

I wonder not at your appointment with him. I may further touch upon some part of this subject by-and-by.

Pray—pray—I pray you now, my dearest friend, contrive to send your Betty Barnes to me!—Does the Coventry Act extend to women, know ye?—The *least* I will do, shall be, to send her home well soused in and dragged through our deepest horse-pond. I'll engage, if I get her hither, that she will keep the anniversary of her deliverance as long as she lives.

I wonder not at Lovelace's saucy answer, saucy as it really is†. If he loves you as he ought, he must be vexed at so great a disappointment. The man must have been a detestable hypocrite, I think, had he not shewn his vexation. Your expectations of such a christian command of temper in him, in a disappointment of this nature especially, are too early by almost half a century in a man of his constitution. But nevertheless I am very far from blaming you for your resentment.

I shall be all impatience to know how this matter ends between you and him. But a *few inches of brick-wall* between you so lately; and now such *mountains!*—And you think to hold it?—May be so!

You see, you say, that the temper he shewed in his preceding letter was not *natural* to him. And did you before think it *was?* Wretched creepers and insinuators! Yet when opportunity serves, as insolent encroachers!—This very Hickman, I make no doubt, would be as saucy as your Lovelace, if he dared. He has not half the arrogant bravery of the other, and can better hide his horns; that's all. But whenever he has the power, depend upon it, he will *butt* at one as valiantly as the other.

If ever I should be persuaded to have him, I shall watch how the obsequious lover *goes off*; and how the imperative husband *comes upon him*; in short, how he *ascends*, and how I *descend*, in the matrimonial wheel, never to take my turn again, but by fits and starts, like the feeble struggles of a sinking state for it's dying liberty.

All good-natured men are passionate, says Mr. Lovelace. A pretty plea to a beloved object in the plenitude of her power! As much as to say, 'Greatly 'as I value you, Madam, I will not 'take pains to curb my passions to 'oblige you.'—Methinks I should be glad to hear from Mr. Hickman such a plea for good-nature as this.

Indeed, we are too apt to make allowances for such tempers as *early* indulgence has made uncontroulable; and therefore habitually evil. But if a boisterous temper, when under *obligation*, is to be thus allowed for, what, when the tables are turned, will it expect? You know a husband, who, I fancy, had some of these early allowances made for him: and you see that

* See Page 139.

† See Page 201.

neither

neither himself nor any-body else is the happier for it.

The suiting of the tempers of two persons who are to come together, is a great matter; and yet there should be boundaries fixed between them, by consent as it were, beyond which neither should go: and each should hold the other to it; or there would probably be encroachments in both. To illustrate my assertion by a very high, and by a more manly (as some would think it) than womanly instance—If the boundaries of the three estates that constitute our political union were not known, and occasionally asserted, what would become of the prerogatives and privileges of each? The two branches of the legislature would encroach upon each other; and the executive power would swallow up both.

But if two persons of discretion, you'll say, come together—

Aye, my dear, that's true: but, if none but persons of discretion were to marry—And would it not surprize you if I were to advance, that the persons of discretion are generally single?—Such persons are apt to consider too much, to resolve.—Are not you and I complimented as such?—And would either of us marry, if the fellows, and our friends, would let us alone?

But to the former point—Had Lovelace made his addresses to me, (unless indeed I had been taken with a liking for him *more* than *conditional*) I would have forbid him, upon the first *passionate* instance of his *good-nature*, as he calls it, ever to see me more; 'Thou must 'bear with me, honest friend,' might I have said, [had I condescended to say any-thing to him] 'an hundred times 'more than this—Be gone therefore!—'I bear with no passions that are pre-'dominant to that thou hast pretended 'for me!'

But to one of your mild and gentle temper, it would be all one, were you married, whether the man were a Lovelace or a Hickman in his spirit.—You are so obediently principled, that perhaps you would have told a mild man, that he must not *entreat*, but *command*; and that it was beneath him not to exact from you the obedience you had so solemnly vowed to him at the altar.—I know of old, my dear, your meek regard to that little piddling part of the marriage-vow which some prerogative-monger foisted into the office, to make that a *duty*, which he knew was not a *right*.

Our way of training up, you say, *makes us need the protection of the brave*. Very true: and how extremely brave and gallant is it, that this brave man will free us from all insults but those which will go nearest to our hearts; that is to say, His own!

How artfully has Lovelace, in the abstract you give me of one of his letters, calculated to your meridian! *Generous spirits hate compulsion!*—He is certainly a deeper creature by much than once we thought him. He knows, as you intimate, that his own wild pranks cannot be concealed; and so owns just enough to palliate (because it teaches you not to be surprized at) any new one, that may come to your ears; and then, truly, he is, however faulty, a mighty *ingenuous* man; and by no means an *hypocrite*: a character the most odious of all others, to *our sex*, in a lover, and the least to be forgiven, were it only because, when detected, it makes us doubt the justice of those praises which we are willing to believe he thought to be our due.

By means of this supposed *ingenuity*, Lovelace obtains a praise, instead of a merited dispraise; and, like an absolved confessionaire, wipes off as he goes along one score, to begin another; for an eye favourable to him will not see his faults through a magnifying glass; nor will a woman, willing to *hope the best*, forbear to impute to ill-will and prejudice all that charity can make so imputable. And if she even give credit to such of the unfavourable imputations as may be too flagrant to be doubted, she will be very apt to take-in the *future hope*, which he inculcates, and which to question would be to question her own power, and perhaps *merit*: and thus may a woman be inclined to make a *slight*, even a *fancied* merit atone for the most *glaring* vice.

I have a reason, a new one, for this preachment upon a text you have given me. But, till I am better informed, I will not explain myself. If it come out, as I shrewdly suspect it will, the man, my dear, is a devil; and you must rather think of—I protest I had like to have said *Solmes* than him.

But let this be as it will, shall I tell you, how, after all his offences, he may creep in with you again?

I will. Thus then: it is but to claim for himself the *good-natured character*; and this, granted, will blot out the fault of *passionate* insolence; and so he will have nothing to do, but this hour to accustom you to insult; the next, to bring you to forgive him, upon his submission: the consequence must be, that he will by this teazing break your resentment all to pieces; and then, a little *more* of the insult, and a little *less* of the submission, on his part, will go down, till nothing else but the *first* will be seen, and not a bit of the *second*: you will then be afraid to provoke so offensive a spirit; and at last will be brought so *prettily*, and so *audibly*, to pronounce the little reptile word OBEY, that it will do one's heart good to hear you. The *Muscovite* wife then takes place of the *managed* mistress.—And if you doubt the progression, be pleased, my dear, to take your mother's judgment upon it.

But no more of this just now. Your situation is become too critical to permit me to dwell upon these sort of topicks. And yet this is but an *affected levity* with me. My heart, as I have heretofore said, is a sincere sharer in all your distresses. My sun-shine darts but through a drizly cloud. My eye, were you to see it, when it seems to you so *gladdened*, as you mentioned in a former, is *more* than ready to overflow, even at the very passages perhaps upon which you impute to me the *archness* of *exultation*.

But now the unheard-of cruelty and perverseness of some of your friends; [*Relations*, I should say—I am always blundering thus!] the *as* strange determinedness of others; your present quarrel with Lovelace; and your approaching interview with Solmes, from which you are right to apprehend a great deal; are such considerable circumstances in your story, that it is fit they should engross all my attention.

You ask me to advise you how to behave upon Solmes's visit. I *cannot* for my life. I know they expect a great deal from it: you had not else had your long day complied with. All I will say is, that if Solmes cannot be prevailed for, now, that Lovelace has so much offended you, he never will. When the interview is over, I doubt not but that I shall have reason to say, that all you did, that all you said, was right, and could not be better: yet, if I don't think so, I won't say so; that I promise you.

Only let me advise you to pull up a spirit, even to your uncle, if there be occasion. Resent the vile and foolish treatment you meet with, in which he has taken so large a share, and make him ashamed of it, if you can.

I know not, upon recollection, but this interview may be a good thing for you, however designed. For when Solmes sees (if that be to *be* so) that it is impossible he should succeed with you; and your relations see it too; the one must, I think, recede, and the other come to terms with you, upon offers, that it is my opinion, will go hard enough with you to comply with; when the *still* harder are dispensed with.

There are several passages in your last letters, as well as in your former, which authorize me to say this. But it would be unseasonable to touch this subject further just now.

But, upon the whole, I have no patience to see you thus made the sport of your brother's and sister's cruelty: for what, after *so much steadiness* on your part, in *so many trials*, can be their hope? *Except indeed it be to drive you to extremity, and to ruin you in the opinion of your uncles, as well as father.*

I urge you by all means to send out of their reach all the letters and papers you would not have them see. Methinks, I would wish you to deposit likewise a parcel of cloaths, linen, and the like, before your interview with Solmes; lest you should not have an opportunity for it afterwards. Robin shall fetch it away on the first orders, by day or by night.

I am in hopes to procure from my mother, if things come to extremity, leave for you to be privately with us.

I will condition to be good-humoured, and even *kind*, to HER favourite, if she will shew me an indulgence that shall make me serviceable to MINE.

This alternative has been a good while in my head. But as your foolish uncle has so strangely attached my mother to their views, I cannot promise that I shall succeed as I wish.

Do not absolutely despair, however. What though the contention will be between *woman* and *woman*? I fancy I shall be able to manage it, by the help

of

of a little *female perſeverance*. Your quarrel with Lovelace, if it continue, will ſtrengthen my hands. And the offers you made in your anſwer to your uncle Harlowe's letter of Sunday night laſt, *duly dwelt upon*, muſt add force to my pleas.

I depend upon your forgiveneſs of all the perhaps unſeaſonable ſlippancies of your naturally too lively, yet moſt ſincerely ſympathizing,

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XXIV.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

FRIDAY, MARCH 31.

YOU have very kindly accounted for your ſilence. People in misfortune are always in doubt. They are too apt to turn even unavoidable accidents into ſlights and neglects; eſpecially in thoſe whoſe favourable opinion they wiſh to preſerve.

I am ſure I ought evermore to exempt my Anna Howe from the ſuppoſed poſſibility of her becoming one of thoſe who baſk only in the ſunſhine of a friend: but, nevertheleſs, her friendſhip is too precious to me, not to doubt my own merits on the one hand, and not to be anxious for the preſervation of it, on the other.

You ſo generouſly give me liberty to chide you, that I am afraid of taking it, becauſe I could ſooner miſtruſt my own judgment, than that of a beloved friend, whoſe ingenuouſneſs in acknowledging an *imputed* error ſeems to ſet her above the commiſſion of a *wilful* one. This makes me half-afraid to aſk you, if you think you are not too cruel, too *ungenerous* ſhall I ſay? in your behaviour to a man who loves you ſo dearly, and is ſo worthy and ſo ſincere a man?

Only it is by YOU, or I ſhould be aſhamed to be outdone in that true magnanimity, which makes one thankful for the wounds given by a true friend. I believe I was guilty of a petulance, which nothing but my uneaſy ſituation can excuſe; if *that* can. I am almoſt *afraid* to beg of you, and yet I repeatedly *do*, to give way to that charming ſpirit, whenever it riſes to your pen, which ſmiles, yet goes to the quick of my fault. What patient ſhall be afraid of a probe in ſo delicate a hand?—I ſay, I am almoſt afraid to pray you to give way to it, for fear you ſhould, for that very reaſon, reſtrain it. For the edge may be taken off, if it does not make the ſubject of it's raillery wince a little. *Permitted* or *deſired* ſatire may be apt, in a generous ſatiriſt, mending as it raillies, to turn too ſoon into panegyrick. Yours is intended to inſtruct; and though it bites, it pleaſes at the ſame time: no fear of a wound's wrankling or feſtering by ſo delicate a point as you carry; not envenomed by *perſonality*, not intending to expoſe, or ridicule, or exaſperate. The moſt admired of our moderns know nothing of this art: why? Becauſe it muſt be founded in good-nature, and directed by a right heart. The *man*, not the *fault*, is generally the ſubject of *their* ſatire: and were it to be *juſt*, how ſhould it be *uſeful*; how ſhould it anſwer any good purpoſe; when every gaſh (for their weapon is a broad-ſword, not a lancet) lets in the air of publick ridicule, and exaſperates where it ſhould heal? Spare me not therefore becauſe I am your *friend*. For *that* very reaſon ſpare me not. I may *feel* your edge, fine as it is. I may be pained: you would loſe your end if I were not; but after the firſt ſenſibility, (as I have ſaid more than once before) I will love you the better, and my amended heart ſhall be all yours; and it will then be more worthy to be yours.

You have taught me what to ſay to, and what to think of, Mr. Lovelace. You have, by agreeable anticipation, let me know how it is probable he will apply to me to be excuſed. I will lay every thing before you that ſhall paſs on the occaſion, if he *do* apply, that I may take your advice, when it can come in time; and when it cannot, that I may receive your correction, or approbation, as I may happen to merit either.—Only one thing muſt be allowed for me; that whatever courſe I ſhall be *permitted* or be *forced* to ſteer, I muſt be conſidered as a perſon out of her own direction. Toſt to and fro by the high winds of paſſionate controul, (and, as I think, unſeaſonable ſeverity) I behold the deſired port, the *ſingle ſtate*, into which I would fain ſteer; but am kept off by the foaming billows of a brother's and ſiſter's envy, and by the raging winds

of

of a ſuppoſed invaded authority; while I ſee in Lovelace, the rocks on one hand, and in Solmes, the ſands on the other; and tremble, leſt I ſhould ſplit upon the former, or ſtrike upon the latter.

But you, my better pilot, to what a charming hope do you bid me aſpire, if things come to extremity!—I will not, as you caution me, too much depend upon your ſucceſs with your mother in my favour; for well I know her high notions of implicit duty in a child: but yet I will *hope* too; becauſe her ſeaſonable protection may ſave me perhaps from a greater raſhneſs. And in this caſe, ſhe ſhall direct me in all my ways; I will do nothing but by her orders, and by her advice and yours; not ſee anybody; not write to any-body; nor ſhall any living ſoul, but by her direction and yours, know where I am. In any cottage place me, I will never ſtir out, unleſs, diſguiſed as your ſervant, I am now-and-then permitted an evening walk with you; and this private protection to be granted for no longer time than till my couſin Morden comes; which, as I hope, cannot be long.

I am afraid I muſt not venture to take the hint you give me, to depoſit ſome of my cloaths; although I will ſome of my linen, as well as papers.

I will tell you why—Betty had for ſome time been very curious about my wardrobe, whenever I took out any of my things before her.

Obſerving this, I once, on taking one of my garden-airings, left my keys in the locks; and on my return ſurprized the creature with her hand upon the keys, as if ſhutting the door.

She was confounded at my ſudden coming back. I took no notice: but, on her retiring, I found my cloaths were not in the uſual order.

I doubted not, upon this, that her curioſity was owing to the orders ſhe had received; and being afraid they would abridge me of my airings, if their ſuſpicions were not obviated, it has ever ſince been my cuſtom (among other contrivances) not only to leave my keys in the locks; but to employ the wench now-and-then in taking out my cloaths, ſuit by ſuit, on pretence of preventing their being rumpled or creaſed, and to ſee that the flowered ſilver ſuit did not tarniſh; ſometimes declaredly to give myſelf employment, having little elſe to do: with which employment (ſuperadded to the delight taken by the low as well as by the high of our ſex in ſeeing fine cloaths) ſhe ſeemed always, I thought, as well pleaſed as if it anſwered one of the offices ſhe had in charge.

To this, and to the confidence they have in a ſpy ſo diligent, and to their knowing, that I have not one confidante in a family in which nevertheleſs I believe every ſervant loves me; nor have attempted to make one; I ſuppoſe, I owe the freedom I enjoy of my airings: and perhaps (finding I make no movements towards going away) they are the more ſecure, that I ſhall at laſt be prevailed upon to comply with their meaſures. Since they muſt think, that, otherwiſe, they give me provocation enough to take ſome raſh ſtep in order to free myſelf from a treatment ſo diſgraceful; and which [God forgive me, if I judge amiſs!] *I am afraid my brother and ſiſter would not be ſorry to drive me to take.*

If therefore ſuch a ſtep ſhould become neceſſary, (which I yet hope will not) I muſt be contented to go away with the cloaths I ſhall have on at the time. My cuſtom to be dreſſed for the day, as ſoon as breakfaſt is over, when I have had no houſhold employments to prevent me, will make ſuch a ſtep (if I am forced to take it) leſs ſuſpected. And the linen I ſhall depoſit, in purſuance of your kind hint, cannot be miſſed.

This cuſtom, although a priſoner (as I may too truly ſay) and neither viſited nor viſiting, I continue. We owe to ourſelves, and to our *ſex*, you know, to be always neat; and never to be ſurprized in a way we ſhould be pained to be ſeen in.

Beſides, people in adverſity (which is the ſtate of trial of every good quality) ſhould endeavour to preſerve laudable cuſtoms, that, if ſunſhine return, they may not be loſers by their trial.

Does it not, moreover, manifeſt a firmneſs of mind, in an unhappy perſon, to keep hope alive? To *hope* for better days, is half to *deſerve* them: for could we have juſt ground for ſuch a hope, if we did not reſolve to deſerve what that hope bids us aſpire to?—Then who ſhall befriend a perſon who forſakes herſelf?

Theſe

These are reflections by which I sometimes endeavour to support myself.

I know you don't despise my *grave airs*, although (with a view no doubt to irradiate my mind in my misfortunes) you railly me upon them. Every-body has not your talent of introducing serious and important lessons, in such a happy manner as at once to delight and instruct.

What a multitude of contrivances may not young people fall upon, if the mind be not engaged by acts of kindness and condescension! I am not used by my friends of late as I always used their servants.

When I was entrusted with the family-management, I always found it right, as well in policy as generosity, to repose a trust in them. Not to seem to expect or depend upon justice from them, is in a manner to bid them take opportunities, whenever they offer, to be unjust.

Mr. Solmes (to expatiate a little on this low, but not unuseful subject) in his more trifling solicitudes, would have had a sorry key-keeper in me. Were I mistress of a family, I would not either take to myself, or give to servants, the pain of keeping those I had reason to suspect. People low in station have often minds not sordid. Nay, I have sometimes thought, that (even take number for number) there are more *honest low people*, than *honest high*. In the one, honesty is their *chief* pride. In the other, the love of power, of grandeur, of pleasure, mislead; and that and their ambition induce a paramount pride, which too often swallows up the more laudable one.

Many of the former would scorn to deceive a confidence. But I have seen, among the most ignorant of their class, a susceptibility of resentment, if their honesty has been suspected: and have more than once been forced to put a servant *right*, whom I have heard say, That, although she valued herself upon her *honesty*, no master or mistress should suspect her for nothing.

How far has the comparison I had in my head, between my friends treatment of *me*, and my treatment of their *servants*, carried me!—But we always allowed ourselves to expatiate on such subjects, whether low or high, as might tend to enlarge our minds, or mend our management, whether notional or practical, and whether such expatiating respected our present, or might respect our probable future situations.

What I was principally leading to, was to tell you, how ingenious I am in my contrivances and pretences to blind my gaolaress, and to take off the jealousy of her principals on my going down so often into the garden and poultry-yard. People suspiciously treated are never I believe at a loss for invention. Sometimes I want *air*, and am better the moment I am out of my chamber—Sometimes *spirits*; and then my bantams and pheasants or the cascade divert me; the former, by their inspiriting livelineſs; the latter, more solemnly, by it's echoing dashings, and hollow murmurs.—Sometimes solitude is of all things my wish; and the awful silence of the night, the spangled element, and the rising and setting sun, how promotive of contemplation!—Sometimes, when I intend nothing, and expect not letters, I am officious to take Betty with me; and at others, bespeak her attendance, when I know she is otherwise employed, and cannot give it me.

These more capital artifices I branch out into lesser ones, without number. Yet *all* have not only the face of truth, but are real truth; although not my principal motive. How prompt a thing is *will!*—What impediments does *diflike* furnish!—How swiftly, through every difficulty, do we move with the one!—How tardily with the other!—Every trifling obstruction weighing us down, as if lead were fastened to our feet!

FRIDAY MORNING, ELEVEN O'CLOCK.

I HAVE already made up my parcel of linen. My heart ached all the time I was employed about it; and still aches, at the thoughts of it's being a necessary precaution.

When the parcel comes to your hands, as I hope it safely will, you will be pleased to open it. You will find in it two parcels sealed up; one of which contains the letters you have not yet seen, being those written since I left you: in the other are all the letters and copies of letters that have passed between you and me since I was last with you; with some other papers on subjects so much

much above me, that I cannot wish them to be seen by any-body whose indulgence I am not so sure of, as I am of yours. If my judgment ripen with my years, perhaps I may review them.

Mrs. Norton used to say, from her reverend father, that youth was the time of life for *imagination* and *fancy* to work in: then, were a writer to lay by his works till *riper years* and *experience* should direct the fire rather to *glow*, than to *flame out*; something between both might perhaps be produced that would not displease a judicious eye.

In a third division, folded up separately, are all Mr. Lovelace's letters written to me since he was forbidden this house, and copies of my answers to them. I expect that you will break the seals of this parcel, and when you have perused them all, give me your free opinion of my conduct.

By the way, not a line from that man!—Not *one* line!—Wednesday I deposited mine. It remained there on Wednesday night. What time it was taken away yesterday I cannot tell: for I did not concern myself about it till towards night; and then it was not there. No return at ten this day. I suppose he is as much out of humour, as I.—With all my heart!

He may be mean enough perhaps, if ever I should put it into his *power*, to avenge himself for the trouble he has had with me.—But that now, I dare say, I never shall.

I see what a sort of a man the encroacher is. And I hope we are equally sick of one another.—My heart is *vexedly* easy, if I may so describe it.—*Vexedly*—because of the apprehended interview with Solmes, and the consequences it may be attended with: or else I should be *quite* easy; for why? I have not *deserved* the usage I receive: and could I be rid of Solmes, as I presume I am of Lovelace, *their* influence over my father, mother, and uncles, against me, could not hold.

The five guineas tied up in one corner of a handkerchief under the linen, I beg you will let pass as an acknowledgment for the trouble I give your trusty servant. You must not chide me for this. You know I cannot be easy unless I have my way in these little matters.

I was going to put up what little money I have, and some of my ornaments; but they are portable, and I cannot forget them. Besides, should they (suspecting me) desire to see any of the jewels, and were I not able to produce them, it would amount to a demonstration of an intention which would have a guilty appearance to them.

FRIDAY, ONE O'CLOCK, IN THE WOOD HOUSE.

No letter yet from this man! I have luckily deposited my parcel, and have your letter of last night. If Robert take this without the parcel, pray let him return immediately for it. But he cannot miss it, I think; and must conclude that it is put there for him to take away. You may believe, from the contents of yours, that I shall immediately write again.

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LETTER XXV.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

THURSDAY NIGHT, MARCH 30.

THE fruits of my enquiry after your abominable wretch's behaviour and baseness at the paltry alehouse, which he calls an inn, prepare to hear.

Wrens and sparrows are not too ignoble a quarry for this villainous gos-hawk!—His assiduities; his watchings; his nightly risques; the inclement weather he journeys in; must not be all placed to *your* account. He has opportunities of making every-thing light to him of that sort. A sweet pretty girl, I am told—Innocent till he went thither—Now! (Ah! poor girl!) who knows what?

But just turned of seventeen!—His friend and brother rake, (a man of humour and intrigue) as I am told, to share the social bottle with. And sometimes another disguised rake or two. No sorrow comes near their hearts. Be not disturbed, my dear, at his *boarsenesses!* His pretty Betsey, his rosebud, as the vile wretch calls her, can *bear* all he says.

He is very fond of her. They say she is innocent even yet—Her father, her grandmother, believe her to be so.

He

He is to fortune her out to a young lover!—Ah! the poor young lover!—Ah! the poor ſimple girl!

Mr. Hickman tells me, that he heard in town, that he uſed to be often at plays, and at the opera, with women; and every time with a different one—Ah! my ſweet friend!—But I hope he is nothing to you, if all this were truth—But this intelligence, in relation to this poor girl, will do his buſineſs, if you had been ever ſo good friends before.

A vile wretch! Cannot ſuch purity in purſuit, in view, reſtrain him? But I leave him to you!—There can be no hope of him. More of a fool, than of ſuch a man. Yet I wiſh I may be able to ſnatch the poor young creature out of his villainous paws. I have laid a ſcheme to do ſo; if *indeed* ſhe be hitherto innocent and heart-free.

He appears to the people as a military man, in diſguiſe, ſecreting himſelf on account of a duel fought in town; the adverſary's life in ſuſpenſe. They believe he is a great man. His friend paſſes for an inferior officer; upon a foot of freedom with him. He, accompanied by a third man, who is a ſort of ſubordinate companion to the ſecond. The wretch himſelf with but one ſervant.

O my dear! How pleaſantly can theſe devils, as I muſt call them, paſs their time, while our gentle boſoms heave with pity for their ſuppoſed ſufferings for us!

* *

I HAVE ſent for this girl and her father; and am juſt now informed, that I ſhall ſee them. I will ſift them thoroughly. I ſhall ſoon find out ſuch a ſimple thing as this, if he has not corrupted her already—And if he has, I ſhall ſoon find that out too.—If more art than nature appears either in her or her father, I ſhall give them both up—But depend upon it, the girl's undone.

He is ſaid to be fond of her. He places her at the upper-end of his table. He ſets her a-prattling. He keeps his friend at a diſtance from her. She prates away. He admires for nature all ſhe ſays. Once was heard to call her 'Charming little creature!' An hundred has he called ſo no doubt. He puts her upon ſinging. He praiſes her wild note.—O, my dear, the girl's undone!—muſt be undone!—The man, you know, is LOVELACE.

Let them bring Wyerley to you, if they will have you married—Any-body but Solmes and Lovelace be yours!—So adviſes *your*

ANNA HOWE.

My deareſt friend, conſider this alehouſe as his garriſon; him as an enemy: his brother-rakes as his aſſiſtants and abettors. Would not your brother, would not your uncles, tremble, if they knew how near them he is, as they paſs to and fro?—I am told, he is reſolved you ſhall not be carried to your uncle Antony's.—What can you do, *with* or *without* ſuch an enterprizing— Fill up the blank I leave.—I cannot find a word bad enough.

LETTER XXVI.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

FRIDAY, THREE O'CLOCK.

YOU incenſe, alarm, and terrify me, at the ſame time—Haſten, my deareſt friend, haſten to me, what further intelligence you can gather about this vileſt of men.

But never talk of innocence, of ſimplicity, and this unhappy girl, together! Muſt ſhe not know, that ſuch a man as that, dignified in his very aſpect; and no diſguiſe able to conceal his being of condition; muſt mean too much, when he places her at the upper-end of his table, and calls her by ſuch tender names? Would a girl, modeſt as ſimple, above ſeventeen, be ſet a ſinging at the pleaſure of ſuch a man as that? A ſtranger, and profeſſedly in diſguiſe!—Would her father and grandmother, if honeſt people, and careful of their ſimple girl, permit ſuch freedoms?

Keep his friend at diſtance from her!—To be ſure his *deſigns* are villainous, if they have not been already effected.

Warn, my dear, if not too late, the unthinking father, of his child's danger. There cannot be a father in the world, who would ſell his child's virtue. No mother!—The poor thing!

I long to hear the reſult of your in-

telligence. You shall *see* the simple creature, you tell me.—Let me know what sort of a girl she is.—'A *sweet pretty* 'girl!' you say. A *sweet* pretty *girl*, my dear!—They are sweet pretty words from your pen. But are they *yours* or *his* of her?—If she be so simple, if she have ease and nature in her manner, in her speech, and warbles prettily her *wild notes*, why, such a girl as that must engage such a profligate wretch, (as now indeed I doubt this man is) accustomed, perhaps, to town women, and their confident ways—Must *deeply* and for a *long season* engage him: since perhaps when her innocence is departed, she will endeavour by art to supply the loss of the natural charms which now engage him.

Fine hopes of such a wretch's reformation! I would not, my dear, for the world have any-thing to say—But I need not make resolutions. I have not opened, nor will I open, his letter.—A sycophant creature!—With his hoarsenesses—got perhaps by a midnight revel, singing to his wild-note finger, and only encreased in the coppice!

To be already on a foot!—In *his* esteem, I mean: for myself, I despise him. I hate myself almost for writing so much about *him*, and of such a simpleton as *this sweet pretty girl* as you call her: but no one can be either *sweet* or *pretty*, that is not modest, that is not virtuous.

And now, my dear, I will tell you, how I came to put you upon this enquiry.

This vile *Joseph Leman* had given a hint to *Betty*, and she to *me*, as if Lovelace would be found out to be a very bad man, at a place where he had been lately seen in disguise. But he would see further, he said, before he told her more; and she promised *secresy*, in hope to get at *further intelligence*. I thought it could be no harm, to get you to inform yourself, and me, of what could be gathered*. And now I see, his enemies are but too well warranted in their reports of him: and, if the ruin of this poor young creature be his aim, and if he had not known her but for his visits to Harlowe Place, I shall have reason to be doubly concerned for her; and doubly incensed against so vile a man.

I think I hate him worse than I do Solmes himself.

But I will not add one other word about him; after I have told you, that I wish to know, as soon as possible, what further occurs from your enquiry. I have a letter from him; but shall not open it till I do: and then, if it come out as I dare say it will, I will directly put the letter unopened into the place I took it from, and never trouble myself more about him. Adieu, my dearest friend.

CL. HARLOWE.

* It will be seen in Vol. I. Letter XXXIV. that Mr. Lovelace's motive for sparing his rosebud was twofold. First, because his pride was gratified by the grandmother's desiring him to spare her grand-daughter. 'Many a pretty rogue,' says he, 'had I spared, whom I 'did not spare, had my power been acknowledged. and my mercy in time implored But 'the Debellare superbos should be my motto, were I to have a new one.'

His other motive will be explained in the following passage, in the same. 'I never was 'so honest, for so long together,' says he, 'since my matriculation. It behoves me so to be. 'Some way or other my recess [at this little inn] may be found out, and it then will be 'thought that my rosebud has attracted me. A report in my favour from simplicities so 'amiable, may establish me,' &c.

Accordingly, as the reader will hereafter see, Mr. Lovelace finds, by the *effects*, his expectations from the contrivance he set on foot by means of his agent Joseph Leman, (who plays, as above, upon Betty Barnes) fully answered, though he could not know what passed on the occasion between the two ladies.

This explanation is the more necessary to be given, as several of our readers (through want of due attention) have attributed to Mr. Lovelace, on his behaviour to his rosebud, a greater merit than was due to him; and moreover imagined, that it was improbable, that a man, who was capable of acting so generously (as they supposed) in *this* instance, should be guilty of any *atrocious* vileness. Not considering, that love, pride, and revenge, as he owns in Vol. I. Letter XXXI. were ingredients of equal force in his composition; and that resistance was a *stimulus* to him.

LETTER

LETTER XXVII.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

FRIDAY NOON, MARCH 31.

JUSTICE obliges me to forward this after my laſt on the wings of the wind, as I may ſay. I really believe the man is innocent. Of this *one* accuſation, I think, he muſt be acquitted; and I am ſorry I was ſo forward in diſpatching away my intelligence by halves.

I have ſeen the girl. She is really a very pretty, a very neat, and, what is ſtill a greater beauty, a very innocent young creature. He who could have ruined ſuch an undeſigning home-bred, muſt have been indeed infernally wicked. Her father is an honeſt ſimple man; entirely ſatisfied with his child, and with her new acquaintance.

I am almoſt afraid for your heart, when I tell you, that I find, now I have got to the bottom of this enquiry, ſomething noble come out in this Lovelace's favour.

The girl is to be married next week; and this promoted and brought about by him. He is reſolved, her father ſays, to make one couple happy, and wiſhes he could make more ſo. [*There's for you, my dear!*] And having taken a liking alſo to the young fellow whom ſhe profeſſes to love, he has given her an hundred pounds: the grandmother actually has it in her hands, to anſwer to the like ſum given to the youth by one of his own relations. While Mr. Lovelace's companion, attracted by the example, has given twenty-five guineas to the father, who is poor, towards cloaths to equip the pretty ruſtick.

Mr. Lovelace and his friend, the poor man ſays, when they firſt came to his houſe, affected to appear as *perſons of low degree*; but now he knows the one (but mentioned it in confidence) to be Colonel Barrow, the other Captain Sloane. The colonel he owns was at firſt very *ſweet upon his girl:* but upon her grandmother's begging of him to ſpare her innocence, he vowed, that he never would offer any-thing but good counſel to her. He kept his word; and the pretty fool acknowledged, that ſhe never could have been better inſtructed by the miniſter himſelf from the *Bible-book!*—The girl pleaſed me ſo well, that I made her viſit to me worth her while.

But what, my dear, will become of us now?—Lovelace not only reformed, but turned preacher!—What will become of us now?—Why, my ſweet friend, your *generoſity* is now engaged in his favour!—Fie upon this *generoſity!* I think in my heart, that it does as much miſchief to the noble-minded, as *love* to the ignobler.—What before was only a *conditional liking*, I am now afraid will turn to *liking unconditional*.

I could not endure to change my invective into panegyrick all at once, and ſo ſoon. We, or ſuch as I at leaſt, love to keep ourſelves in countenance for a raſh judgment, even when we know it to be raſh. Every-body has not your generoſity in confeſſing a miſtake. It requires a greatneſs of ſoul frankly to do it. So I made ſtill farther enquiry after his life and manners, and behaviour there, in hopes to find ſomething bad: but all uniform!

Upon the whole, Mr. Lovelace comes out with ſo much advantage from this enquiry, that were there the leaſt room for it, I ſhould ſuſpect the whole to be *a plot ſet on foot to waſh a blackamore white*. Adieu, my dear.

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XXVIII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

SATURDAY, APRIL 1.

HASTY cenſures do indeed ſubject themſelves to the charge of variableneſs and inconſiſtency in judgment: and ſo they ought; for if you, even you, my dear, were ſo loth to own a miſtake, as in the inſtance before us you pretend you were, I believe I ſhould not have loved you ſo well as I really do love you. Nor could you, in that caſe, have ſo frankly thrown the reflection I hint at upon yourſelf, had not your mind been one of the moſt ingenuous that ever woman boaſted.

Mr. Lovelace has faults enow to deſerve very ſevere cenſure, although he

be not guilty of this. If I were upon such terms with him as he could wish me to be, I should give him a hint, that this treacherous Joseph Leman cannot be *so much* attached to him, as perhaps he thinks him to be. If he were, he would not have been so ready to report to his disadvantage (and to Betty Barnes too) this slight affair of the pretty rustick. Joseph has engaged Betty to secresy; promising to let her, and her young master too, know more, when he knows the whole of the matter: and this hinders her from mentioning it, as she is nevertheless agog to do, to my sister or brother. And then she does not chuse to disoblige Joseph; for although she pretends to look above him, she listens, I believe, to some love-stories he tells her.

Women having it not in their power to *begin* a courtship, some of them very frequently, I believe, lend an *ear* where their *hearts* incline not.

But to say no more of these low people, neither of whom I think tolerably of; I must needs own, that as I should for ever have despised this man, had he been capable of such a vile intrigue in his way to Harlowe Place, and as I believed he *was* capable of it, it has indeed [I own it has] proportionably engaged my *generosity*, as you call it, in his favour: perhaps *more than I may have reason to wish it had*. And, r illy me as you will, pray tell me fairly, my dear, would it not have had such an effect upon you?

Then the *real* generosity of the act.—I protest, my beloved friend, if he would be good for the rest of his life from this time, I would forgive him a great many of his past errors, were it only for the demonstration he has given in this, that he is *capable* of so good and bountiful a manner of thinking.

You may believe I made no scruple to open his letter, after the receipt of your second on this subject: nor shall I of answering it, as I have no reason to find fault with it.—An article in his favour, procured him, however, so much the easier (I must own) by way of amends for the undue displeasure I took against him; though he knows it not.

It is lucky enough that this matter was cleared up to me by your friendly diligence so soon: for had I written before it was, it would have been to reinforce my dismission of him; and perhaps I should have mentioned the very motive; for it affected me more than I think it ought: and then, what an advantage would that have given him, when he could have cleared up the matter so happily for himself!

When I send you this letter of his, you will see how very humble he is: what *acknowledgments* of *natural* impatience; what confession of faults, as you prognosticated.

A very different appearance, I must own, all these make, now the story of the pretty rustick is cleared up, to what they would have made, had it not.

You will see how he accounts to me, That he could not, by reason of indisposition, come for my letter in person: and the forward creature labours the point, as if he thought I should be uneasy that he did not. I am indeed sorry he should be ill on my account; and I will allow, that the suspense he has been in for some time past, must have been vexatious enough to so impatient a spirit. But all is owing originally to himself.

You will find him (in the presumption of being forgiven) full of contrivances and expedients for my escaping the threatened compulsion.

I have always said, that next to being without fault is the acknowledgment of a fault; since no amendment can be expected where an error is defended: but you will see in this very letter, an haughtiness even in his submissions. 'Tis true, I know not where to find fault as to the expression; yet cannot I be satisfied, that his humility *is* humility; or even an humility upon such conviction as one should be pleased with.

To be sure he is far from being a polite man: yet is not directly and characteristically, as I may say, *unpolite*. But *his* is such a sort of politeness, as has by a carelessness founded on very early indulgence, and perhaps on too much success in riper years, and an arrogance built upon both, grown into assuredness, and of course, as I may say, into indelicacy.

The distance you recommend at which to keep these men, is certainly right in the main: familiarity destroys reverence; but with whom?—Not with those, surely, who are prudent, grateful, and generous.

But it is very difficult for persons, who

who would avoid running into one extreme, to keep clear of another. Hence Mr. Lovelace, perhaps, thinks it the mark of a great spirit to humour his pride, though at the expence of his politeness: but can the man be a deep man, who knows not how to make such distinctions as a person of but moderate parts cannot miss?

He complains heavily of my readiness to take mortal offence at him, and to dismiss him for ever: it is a *high* conduct, he says, he must be frank enough to tell me; a conduct that must be very far from contributing to allay his apprehensions of the possibility that I may be prosecuted into my relations measures in behalf of Mr. Solmes.

You will see how he puts his present and his future happiness, with regard to both worlds, entirely upon me. The ardour with which he vows and promises, I think the heart only can dictate: how else can one guess at a man's heart?

You will also see, that he has already heard of the interview I am to have with Mr. Solmes; and with what vehemence and anguish he expresses himself on the occasion.—I intend to take proper notice of the ignoble means he stoops to, to come at his early intelligence out of our family. If persons pretending to principle bear not their testimony against unprincipled actions, what check can they have?

You will see, how passionately he presses me to oblige him with a few lines, before the interview between Mr. Solmes and me take place, (if, as he says, it *must* take place) to confirm his hope, that I have no view, in my present displeasure against *him*, to give encouragement to *Solmes*. An apprehension, he says, that he must be excused for repeating; especially as the interview is a favour granted to that man, which I have refused to him; since, as he infers, were it not with such an expectation, why should my *friends* press it?

* *

I HAVE written; and to this effect—That I had never intended to write another line to a man, who could take upon himself to reflect upon my sex and myself, for having thought fit to make use of my own judgment.

I tell him, That I have submitted to this interview with Mr. Solmes, purely as an act of duty, to shew my friends, that I will comply with their commands as far as I can; and that I hope, when Mr. Solmes himself shall see how determined I am, he will cease to prosecute a suit, in which it is impossible he should succeed with my consent.

I assure him, That my aversion to Mr. Solmes is too sincere to permit me to doubt myself on this occasion. But, nevertheless, he must not imagine, that my rejecting of Mr. Solmes is in favour to him. That I value my freedom and independency too much, if my friends will but leave me to my own judgment, to give them up to a man so uncontroulable, and who shews me beforehand what I have to expect from him, were I in his power.

I express my high disapprobation of the methods he takes to come at what passes in a private family: the pretence of corrupting other people's servants by way of reprisal for the spies they have set upon him, I tell him is a very poor excuse; and no more than an attempt to justify one meanness by another.

There is, I observe to him, a *right* and a *wrong* in every thing, let people put what glosses they please upon their actions. To condemn a deviation, and to follow it by as great a one, what, I ask him, is this, but propagating a general corruption? A stand must be made by somebody, turn round the evil as many as may, or virtue will be lost: *and shall it not be I*, a worthy mind would ask, that shall make this stand?

I leave him to judge, whether *his* be a worthy one, tried by this rule: and whether, knowing the impetuosity of his own disposition, and the improbability there is that my father and family will ever be reconciled to him, I ought to encourage his hopes?

These spots and blemishes, I further tell him, gave me not earnestness enough for any sake but *his own*, to wish him in a juster and nobler train of thinking and acting; for that I truly despise many of the ways he allows himself in: our minds are therefore infinitely different: and as to his professions of reformation, I must tell him, that profuse acknowledgments, without amendment, are but to me as so many anticipating

cipating conceſſions, which he may find much eaſier to make, than either to defend himſelf, or amend his errors.

I inform him, that I have been lately made acquainted [and ſo I have by Betty, and ſhe by my brother] with the weak and wanton airs he gives himſelf of declaiming againſt matrimony. I ſeverely reprehend him on this occaſion: and aſk him, with what view he can take ſo witleſs, ſo deſpicable a liberty, in which only the moſt abandoned of men allow themſelves, and yet preſume to addreſs *me?*

I tell him, That if I am obliged to go to my uncle Antony's, it is not to be inferred, that I muſt therefore *neceſſarily* be Mr. Solmes's wife: ſince I may not be ſo ſure perhaps that the ſame exceptions lie ſo ſtrongly againſt my quitting a houſe to which I ſhall be forcibly carried, as if I left my father's houſe: and, at the worſt, I may be able to keep them in ſuſpenſe till my couſin Morden comes, who will have a right to put me in poſſeſſion of my grandfather's eſtate, if I inſiſt upon it. This, I doubt, is ſomewhat of an artifice; which can only be excuſable, as it is principally deſigned to keep him out of miſchief. For I have but little hope, if carried thither, whether ſenſible or ſenſeleſs, if I am left to the mercy of my brother and ſiſter, but they will endeavour to force the ſolemn obligation upon me. Otherwiſe, were there but any proſpect of avoiding this, by delaying (or even by taking things to make me ill, if nothing elſe would do) till my couſin comes, I hope I ſhould not think of leaving even my uncle's houſe. For I ſhould not know how to ſquare it to my own principles, to diſpenſe with the duty I owe to my father, wherever it ſhall be his will to place me.

But while you give me the charming hope, that, in order to avoid one man, I ſhall not be under the neceſſity of throwing myſelf upon the friends of the other; I think my caſe not abſolutely deſperate.

* *

I SEE not any of my family, nor hear from them in any way of kindneſs. This looks as if they themſelves expected no great matters from that Tueſday's conference which makes my heart flutter every time I think of it.

My uncle Antony's preſence on the occaſion I do not much like: but I had rather meet him than my brother or ſiſter; yet my uncle is very impetuous. I can't think Mr. Lovelace can be much more ſo; at leaſt he cannot *look* anger, as my uncle, with his harder features, can. Theſe ſea-proſpered gentlemen, as my uncle has often made me think, not uſed to any but elemental controul, and even ready to buffet that, bluſter often as violently as the winds they are accuſtomed to be angry at.

I believe Mr. Solmes will look as much like a fool as I ſhall do, if it be true, as my uncle Harlowe writes, and as Betty often tells me, that he is as much afraid of ſeeing me, as I am of ſeeing him.

Adieu, my happy, thrice happy Miſs Howe, who have no hard terms affixed to your duty!—Who have nothing to do, but to fall in with a choice your mother has made for you, to which you have not, nor can have, a juſt objection: except the frowardneſs of our ſex, as our free cenſurers would perhaps take the liberty to ſay, makes it one, that the choice was your mother's, at firſt hand. Perverſe nature, we know, loves not to be preſcribed to; although youth is not ſo well qualified, either by ſedateneſs or experience, to chuſe for itſelf.

To *know* your own happineſs, and that it is *now*, nor to leave it to *after-reflection* to look back upon the *preferable paſt* with a heavy and ſelf-accuſing heart, that you did not chuſe it when you might have choſen it, is all that is neceſſary to compleat your felicity!—And this power is wiſhed you by *your*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LETTER XXIX.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

SUNDAY, APRIL 2.

I Ought yeſterday to have acknowledged the receipt of your parcel: Robin tells me, that the Joſeph Leman whom you mention as the traitor, ſaw him. He was in the poultry-yard, and ſpoke to Robin over the bank which divides that from the Green Lane.

Lane. 'What brings you hither, Mr. 'Robert?—But I can tell. Hie away, 'as fast as you can.'

No doubt but their dependance upon this fellow's vigilance, and upon Betty's, leaves you more at liberty in your airings, than you would otherwise be. But you are the only person I ever heard of, who in such circumstances had not some faithful servant to trust little offices to. A poet, my dear, would not have gone to work for an Angelica, without giving her her Violetta, her Cleanthe, her Clelia, or some such pretty-named confidante—An old nurse at the least.

I read to my mother several passages of your letters. But your last paragraph, in your yesterday's, quite charmed her. You have won her heart by it, she told me. And while her fit of gratitude for it lasted, I was thinking to make my proposal, and to press it with all the earnestness I could give it, when Hickman came in, making his legs, and stroking his cravat and ruffles.

I could most freely have *ruffled* him for it. As it was—'Sir,' said I, 'saw 'you not some of the servants?—'Could not one of them have come in 'before you?'

He begged pardon; looked as if he knew not whether he had best keep his ground, or withdraw:—till my mother, his fast friend, interposed—'Why, 'Nancy, we are not upon particulars. '—Pray, Mr. Hickman, sit down.'

'By your le—ave, good Madam,' to me. You know his drawl, when his muscles give him the respectful hesitation.

'Aye, aye, pray sit down, honest 'man, if you are weary—But by my '*mamma*, if you please. I desire my 'hoop may have it's full circumfe-'rence. All they're good for, that 'I know, is to clean dirty shoes, and 'to keep fellows at a distance.'

'Strange girl!' cried my mother, displeased; but with a milder turn, 'Aye, aye, Mr. Hickman, sit down 'by *me*: I have no such *forbidding* 'folly in my dress.'

I looked serious; and in my heart was glad this speech of hers was not made to your uncle Antony.

My mother, with the true widow's freedom, would mighty prudently have led into the subject we had been upon; and would have had read to him, I question not, that very paragraph in your letter which is so much in his favour. He was highly obliged to dear Miss Harlowe, she would assure him; that she *did* say.

But I asked him, if he had any news by his last letters from London—A question which he always understands to be a *subject changer*; for otherwise I never put it. And so if he be *but* silent, I am not angry with him that he answers it not.

I chuse not to mention my proposal before him, till I know how it will be relished by my mother. If it be not well received, perhaps I may employ *him* on the occasion. Yet I don't like to owe him an obligation, if I could help it. For men who have his views in their heads, do so parade it, so strut about, if a woman condescend to employ them in her affairs, that one has no patience with them.

However, if I *find* not an opportunity this day, I will make one to-morrow.

I shall not open either of your sealed-up parcels, but in *your* presence. There is no need. Your conduct is out of all question with me: and by the extracts you have given me from his letters and your own, I know all that relates to the present situation of things between you.

I was going to give you a little flippant hint or two. But since you wish to be thought superior to all our sex in the command of yourself; and since indeed you deserve to be thought so; I will spare you. You are, however, at times, more than half inclined to speak out. That you do not, is only owing to a little bashful struggle between *you* and *yourself*, as I may say. When that is quite got over, I know you will favour me undisguisedly with the result.

I cannot forgive your taking upon you (at so extravagant a rate too) to pay my mother's servant. Indeed I *am*, and I *will be*, angry with you for it. A year's wages at once well nigh! only as unknown to my mother, I make it better for the servants according to their merits—How it made the man stare!—And it may be his ruin too, as far as I know. If he should buy a ring, and marry a sorry body in the neighbourhood with the money, one would be loth, a twelvemonth hence, that the poor old fellow should think he had reason to wish the bounty never conferred.

I MUST

I MUST *give you your way in these things*, you say.—And I know there is no contradicting you: for you were ever putting too great a value upon little offices done for *you*, and too little upon the great ones you do for *others*. The satisfaction you have in doing so, I grant it, repays you. But why should you, by the nobleness of your mind, throw reproaches upon the rest of the world? Particularly upon your own family and upon ours too?

If, as I have heard you say, it is a good rule to *give* WORDS *the hearing, but to form our judgments of men and things* by DEEDS ONLY; what shall we think of one, who seeks to find palliatives in *words*, for narrowness of heart in the very persons her *deeds* so silently, yet so forcibly, reflect upon? Why blush you not, my dear friend, to be thus singular?—When you meet with another person whose mind is like your own, then display your excellences as you please: but till then, for pity's sake, let your heart and your spirit suffer a little contraction.

I intended to write but a few lines; chiefly to let you know, your parcels are come safe. And accordingly I began in a large hand; and I am already come to the end of my second sheet. But I could write a quire without hesitation upon a subject so copious and so beloved as is your praise.—Not for *this* single instance of your generosity; since I am really angry with you for it; but for the benevolence exemplified in the whole tenor of your life and actions; of which this is but a common instance. Heaven direct you, in your own arduous trials, is all I have room to add; and make you happy, as you think to be *your own*

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XXX.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

SUNDAY NIGHT, APRIL 2.

I Have many new particulars to acquaint you with, that shew a great change in the behaviour of my friends to me. I did not think we had so much art among us, as I find we have. I will give these particulars to you as they offered.

All the family was at church in the morning. They brought good Dr. Lewen with them, in pursuance of a previous invitation. And the doctor sent up to desire my permission to attend me in my own apartment.

You may believe it was easily granted.

So the doctor came up.

We had a conversation of near an hour before dinner: but, to my surprize, he waved every-thing that would have led to the subject I supposed he wanted to talk about. At last, I asked him, If it were not thought strange I should be so long absent from church? He made me some handsome compliments upon it; but said, for his part, he had ever made it a rule, to avoid interfering in the private concerns of families, unless desired to do so.

I was prodigiously disappointed: but supposing that he was thought too just a man to be made a judge of in this cause; I led no more to it: nor, when he was called down to dinner, did he take the least notice of leaving me behind him there.

But this was not the first time since my confinement that I thought it a hardship not to dine below. And when I parted with him on the stairs, a tear would burst it's way; and he hurried down; his own good-natured eyes glistening; for he saw it.—Nor trusted he his voice, lest the accent I suppose should have discovered his concern; departing in silence, though with his usual graceful obligingness.

I hear, that he praised me, and my part in the conversation that passed between us.—To shew them, I suppose, that it was not upon the interesting subjects which I make no doubt he was desired not to enter upon.

He left me so dissatisfied, yet so perplexed with this new way of treatment, that I never found myself so much disconcerted, and out of my train.

But I was to be more so. This was to be a day of puzzle to me. *Pregnant* puzzle, if I may so say: for there must great meaning lie behind it.

In the afternoon, all but my brother and sister went to church with the good doctor; who left his compliments for me. I took a walk in the garden: my brother and sister walked in it too, and kept me in their eye a good while, on purpose, as I thought, that I might see how

how gay and good-humoured they were together.' At laſt they came down the walk that I was coming up, hand-in-hand, lover-like.

'Your ſervant, Miſs!'—'Your ſervant, Sir!'—paſſed between my brother and me.

'Is it not cold-iſh, ſiſter Clary?' in a kinder voice than uſual, ſaid my ſiſter, and ſtopped.—I ſtopped and curtſeyed low to her half-curtſey.—'I think 'not, ſiſter,' ſaid I.

She went on. I curtſeyed without return; and proceeded, turning to my poultry-yard.

By a ſhorter turn, arm-in-arm, they were there before me.

'I think, Clary,' ſaid my brother, 'you muſt preſent me with ſome of this 'breed, for Scotland.'

'If you pleaſe, brother.'

'I'll chuſe for you,' ſaid my ſiſter.

And while I fed them, they pointed to half a dozen: yet intending nothing by it, I believe, but to ſhew a deal of love and good-humour to each other before me.

My uncles next, (at their return from church) were to do me the honour of *their* notice. They bid Betty tell me, they would drink tea with me in my own apartment. 'Now,' thought I, 'ſhall I have the ſubject of next 'Tueſday enforced upon me.'

But they contradicted the order for tea, and only my uncle Harlowe came up to me.

Half-diſtant, half-affectionate, at his entering my chamber, was the air he put on to his *daughter-niece*, as he uſed to call me; and I threw myſelf at his feet, and beſought his favour.

'None of theſe diſcompoſures, child. 'None of theſe apprehenſions. You 'will now have every-body's favour. 'All is coming about, my dear. I was 'impatient to ſee you. I could no 'longer deny myſelf this ſatisfaction.' He then raiſed me, and kiſſed me, and called me 'Charming creature!'

But he waved entering into any intereſting ſubject. 'All will be well 'now. All will be right.—No more 'complainings! Every-body loves you! '—I only came to make my earlieſt 'court to you!' [were his condeſcending words] 'and to ſit and talk of 'twenty and twenty fond things, as I 'uſed to do.—And let every paſt diſ-'agreeable thing be forgotten, as if no-'thing had happened.'

He underſtood me as beginning to hint at the diſgrace of my confinement —'No diſgrace, my dear, can fall to 'your lot: your reputation is too well 'eſtabliſhed.—I longed to ſee you,' repeated he—'I have ſeen nobody half 'ſo amiable ſince I ſaw you laſt.'

And again he kiſſed my cheek, my glowing cheek; for I was impatient, I was vexed, to be thus, as I thought, played upon: and how could I be thankful for a viſit, that (it now was evident) was only a too *humble* artifice, to draw me in againſt the next Tueſday, or to leave me inexcuſable to them all?

O my cunning brother!—This is *his* contrivance. And then my anger made me recollect the triumph in his and my ſiſter's fondneſs for each other, as practiſed before me; and the mingled indignation flaſhing from their eyes, as arm-in-arm they ſpoke to me, and the forced condeſcenſion playing upon their lips, when they called me Clary, and Siſter.

Do you think I could, with theſe reflections, look upon my uncle Harlowe's viſit as the favour he ſeemed deſirous I ſhould think it to be?—Indeed I could not; and ſeeing him ſo ſtudiouſly avoid all recrimination, as I may call it, I gave into the affectation; and followed him in his talk of indifferent things: while he ſeemed to admire this thing and that, as if he had never ſeen them before; and now-and-then condeſcendingly kiſſed the hand that wrought ſome of the things he fixed his eyes upon; not ſo much to admire them, as to find ſubjects to divert what was moſt in *his* head, and in *my* heart.

At his going away—'How can I 'leave you here by yourſelf, my dear? 'You, whoſe company uſed to enliven 'us all. You are not expected down 'indeed: but I proteſt I had a good 'mind to ſurprize your father and mo-'ther!—If I thought nothing would 'ariſe that would be diſagreeable— 'My dear! my love!' [O the dear artful gentleman! How could my uncle Harlowe ſo diſſemble?] 'What ſay you? 'Will you give me your hand? Will 'you ſee your father? Can you ſtand 'his diſpleaſure, on firſt ſeeing the dear 'creature who has given him and all

'of us so much disturbance? Can you 'promise future—'

He saw me rising in my temper— 'Nay, my dear,' interrupting himself, 'if you cannot be all resignation, I 'would not have you think of it.'

My heart, struggling between duty and warmth of temper, was full. You know, my dear, I never could bear to be dealt meanly with!—'How—how 'can you, Sir! You, my papa-uncle '—How *can* you, Sir!—The poor 'girl!'—For I could not speak with connexion.

'Nay, my dear, if you cannot be all 'duty, all resignation—better stay 'where you are.—But after the instance 'you have given—'

'*Instance I have given!*—What in-'stance, Sir?'

'Well, well, child, better stay where 'you are, if your past confinement 'hangs so heavy upon you—But now 'there will be a sudden end to it— 'Adieu, my dear!—Three words on-'ly—Let your compliance be sincere! '—And love me, as you used to love 'me—Your grandfather did not do so 'much for you, as I will do for you.'

Without suffering me to reply, he hurried away, as I thought, like one who had been employed to act a part against his will, and was glad it was over.

Don't you see, my dear Miss Howe, how they are all determined?—Have I not reason to dread next Tuesday?

Up presently after came my sister:—to observe, I suppose, the way I was in. She found me in tears.

'Have you not a Thomas à Kem-'pis, sister?' with a stiff air.

'I have, Madam.'

'*Madam!*—How long are we to be 'at this distance, Clary?'

'*No longer*, my dear Bella, if you 'allow me to call you sister.' And I took her hand.

'No fawning neither, girl!'

I withdrew my hand as hastily, as you may believe I should have done, had I, in feeling for one of your parcels under the wood, been bitten by a viper.

'I beg pardon,' said I—'Too-too 'ready to make advances, I am al-'ways subjecting myself to contempts.'

'People who know not how to keep 'a middle behaviour,' said she, 'must 'ever-more do so.'

'I will fetch you the Kempis, sister.' I did. 'Here it is. You will find 'excellent things, Bella, in that little 'book.'

'I wish,' retorted she, 'you had 'profited by them.'

'I wish *you* may,' said I. '*Exam-'ple* from a sister older than one's self 'is a fine thing.'

'Older! Saucy little fool!'—And away she flung.

What a captious old woman will my sister make, if she live to be one!—demanding the reverence, perhaps, yet not aiming at the merit; and ashamed of the years that can only entitle her to the reverence.

It is plain from what I have *related*, that they think they have got me at some advantage by obtaining my consent to this interview: but if it were *not*, Betty's impertinence just now would make it evident. She has been complimenting me upon it; and upon the visit of my uncle Harlowe. She says, The difficulty now is more than half over with me. She is sure I would not see Mr. Solmes, but to have him. Now shall she be soon better employed than of late she has been. All hands will be at work. She loves dearly to have weddings go forward!—Who knows, whose turn will be next?

I found in the afternoon a reply to my answer to Mr. Lovelace's letter. It is full of promises, full of vows of gratitude, of *eternal* gratitude, is his word, among others still more hyperbolick. Yet Mr. Lovelace, the *least* of any man whose letters I have seen, runs into those elevated absurdities. I should be apt to despise him for it, if he did. Such language looks always to me, as if the flatterer thought to *find* a woman a fool, or hoped to *make* her one.

He regrets my indifference to him; which puts all the hope he has in my favour upon the shocking usage I receive from my friends.

As to my charge upon him of unpoliteness and uncontroulableness—What [he asks] can he say? Since being unable absolutely to vindicate himself, he has too much ingenuousness to attempt to do so: yet is struck dumb by my harsh construction, that his acknowledging temper is owing more to his carelessness to defend himself, than to his inclination to amend. He had

had never *before* met with the objections againſt his morals which I had raiſed, *juſtly* raiſed: and he was reſolved to obviate them. What is it, he aſks, that he has promiſed, but reformation by my example? And what occaſion for the promiſe, if he had not faults, and thoſe very great ones, to reform? He hopes, acknowledgment of an error is no bad ſign; although my ſevere virtue has interpreted it into one.

He believes, I may be right (*ſeverely* right, he calls it) in my judgment againſt making repriſals in the caſe of the intelligence he receives from my family: he cannot charge himſelf to be of a temper that leads him to be inquiſitive into any-body's private affairs; but hopes, that the circumſtances of the caſe, and the ſtrange conduct of my friends, will excuſe him; eſpecially, when ſo much depends upon his knowing the movements of a family ſo violently bent, by meaſures right or wrong, to carry their point againſt me, in malice to him. People, he ſays, who act like angels, ought to have angels to deal with. For his part, he has not yet learned the difficult leſſon of returning *good for evil:* and ſhall think himſelf the leſs encouraged to learn it by the treatment I have met with from the very perſons, who would trample upon him, as they do upon me, were he to lay himſelf under their feet.

He excuſes himſelf for the liberties he owns he has heretofore taken in ridiculing the marriage-ſtate. It is a ſubject, he ſays, that he has not of late treated ſo lightly. He owns it to be ſo trite, ſo beaten a topick with all libertines and witlings; ſo frothy, ſo empty, ſo nothing-meaning, ſo worn-out a theme, that he is heartily aſhamed of himſelf, ever to have made it *his*. He condemns it as a ſtupid reflection upon the laws and good order of ſociety, and upon a man's own anceſtors: and in himſelf, who has ſome reaſon to value himſelf upon his deſcent and alliances, more cenſurable, than in thoſe who have not the ſame advantage to boaſt of. He promiſes to be more circumſpect than ever, both in his words and actions, that he may be more and more worthy of my approbation; and that he may give an aſſurance beforehand, that a foundation is laid in his mind for my example to work upon with equal reputation and effect to us both—If he may be ſo happy to call me his.

He gives me up as abſolutely loſt, if I go to my uncle Antony's: the cloſe confinement; the moated-houſe; the chapel; the implacableneſs of my brother and ſiſter, and their power over the reſt of my family, he ſets forth in ſtrong lights; and plainly ſays, that he muſt have a ſtruggle to prevent my being carried thither.

Your kind, your generous endeavours to intereſt your mother in my behalf, will, I hope, prevent thoſe harſher extremities to which I might be otherwiſe driven. And to you I will fly, if permitted, and keep all my promiſes, of not correſponding with any-body, not ſeeing any-body, but by your mother's direction and yours.

I will cloſe and depoſit at this place. It is not neceſſary to ſay, how much I am *your ever-affectionate and obliged,*

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER XXXI.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

I Am glad my papers are ſafe in your hands. I will make it my endeavour to deſerve your good opinion, that I may not at once diſgrace your judgment, and my own heart.

I have another letter from Mr. Lovelace. He is extremely apprehenſive of the meeting I am to have with Mr. Solmes to-morrow. He ſays, That the airs that wretch gives himſelf on the occaſion, add to his concern; and it is with infinite difficulty that he prevails upon himſelf not to make him a viſit to let him know what he may expect, if compulſion be uſed towards me in his favour. He aſſures me, That Solmes has actually talked with tradeſmen of new equipages, and names the people in town with whom he has treated: that he has even [Was there ever ſuch a horrid wretch!] allotted this and that apartment in his houſe, for a nurſery, and other offices.

How ſhall I bear to hear ſuch a creature talk of love to me? I ſhall be out of all patience with him. Beſides, I thought that he did not dare to make or

talk of these impudent preparations—So inconsistent as such are with my brother's views—But I fly the subject.

Upon this confidence of Solmes, you will less wonder at that of Lovelace, in pressing me in the name of all his family, to escape from so determined a violence as is intended to be offered to me at my uncle's: that the forward contriver should propose Lord M.'s chariot and six to be at the stile that leads up to the lonely coppice adjoining to our paddock. You will see how audaciously he mentions settlements ready drawn; horsemen ready to mount; and one of his cousins Montague to be in the chariot, or at the George in the neighbouring village, waiting to accompany me to Lord M.'s, or to Lady Betty's, or Lady Sarah's, or to town, as I please; and upon such orders, or conditions, and under such restrictions as to himself, as I shall prescribe.

You will see how he threatens, To watch and way-lay them, and to *rescue* me as he calls it, by an armed force of friends and servants, if they attempt to carry me against my will to my uncle's; and this, whether I give my consent to the enterprize, or not:—since he shall have no hopes if I am once there.

O my dear friend! Who can think of these things, and not be extremely miserable in her apprehensions!

This mischievous sex! What had I to do with any of them; or they with me?—I had deserved this, were it by my own seeking, by my own giddiness, that I had brought myself into this situation—I wish with all my heart—But how foolishly we are apt to wish when we find ourselves unhappy, and know not how to help ourselves!

On your mother's goodness, however, is my reliance. If I can but avoid being precipitated on either hand, till my cousin Morden arrives, a reconciliation must follow; and all will be happy.

I have deposited a letter for Mr. Lovelace; in which I charge him, as he would not disoblige me for ever, to avoid any rash step, any visit to Mr. Solmes, which may be followed by acts of violence.

I re-assure him, That I will sooner die than be that man's wife.

Whatever be my usage, whatever shall be the result of the apprehended interview, I insist upon it that he presume not to offer violence to any of my friends: and express myself highly displeased, that he should presume upon such an interest in my esteem, as to think himself entitled to dispute my father's authority in my removal to my uncle's; although I tell him, that I will omit neither prayers nor contrivance, even to the making of myself ill, to avoid going.

To-morrow is Tuesday! How soon comes upon us the day we dread!—O that a deep sleep of twenty-four hours would seize my faculties!—But then the next day would be Tuesday, as to all the effects and purposes for which I so much dread it. If this reach you before the event of the so much apprehended interview can be known, pray for *your*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LETTER XXXII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

TUESDAY MORNING, SIX O'CLOCK.

THE day is come!—I wish it were happily over. I have had a wretched night. Hardly a wink have I slept, ruminating upon the approaching interview. The very distance of time to which they consented, has added solemnity to the meeting, which otherwise it would not have had.

A thoughtful mind is not a blessing to be coveted, unless it had such a happy vivacity with it as yours: a vivacity, which enables a person to enjoy the *present*, without being over-anxious about the *future*.

TUESDAY, ELEVEN O'CLOCK.

I HAVE had a visit from my aunt Hervey. Betty, in her alarming way, told me, I should have a lady to breakfast with me, whom I little expected; giving me to believe it was my mother. This fluttered me so much, on hearing a lady coming up-stairs, supposing it was she, (and not knowing how to account for her motives in such a visit, after I had been so long banished from her presence) that my aunt, at her entrance, took notice of my disorder, and after her first salutation—

'Why, Miss,' said she, 'you seem 'surprized.

'surprized.—Upon my word, you 'thoughtful young ladies have strange 'apprehensions about nothing at all. 'What,' taking my hand, 'can be 'the matter with you?—Why, my 'dear, tremble, tremble, tremble at 'this rate? You'll not be fit to be seen 'by any-body. Come, my love,' kissing my cheek, 'pluck up a cou-'rage. By this needless flutter on the 'approaching interview, when it is 'over, you will judge of your other 'antipathies, and laugh at yourself 'for giving way to so apprehensive an 'imagination.'

I said, that whatever we strongly imagined, was, in it's effects at the time, *more* than imaginary, although to others it might not appear so: that I had not rested one hour all night; that the impertinent set over me, by giving me room to think my mother was coming up, had so much disconcerted me, that I should be very little qualified to see any-body I disliked to see.

There was no accounting for these things, she said. Mr. Solmes last night supposed he should be under as much agitation as I could be.

'Who is it, then, Madam, that so 'reluctant an interview on *both* sides, 'is to please?'

'Both of you, my dear, I hope, af-'ter the first flurries are over. The 'most apprehensive beginnings, I have 'often known, make the happiest con-'clusions.'

'There can be but one happy con-'clusion to the intended visit; and 'that is, That both sides may be sa-'tisfied it will be the last.'

She then represented, how unhappy it would be for me, if I did not suffer myself to be prevailed upon: she pressed me to receive Mr. Solmes as became my education; and declared, that his apprehensions on the expectation he had of seeing me, were owing to his love and his awe; intimating, That true love is ever accompanied by fear and reverence; and that no blustering, braving lover, could deserve encouragement.

To this I answered, That constitution was to be considered: that a man of spirit would act like one, and could do nothing meanly; that a creeping mind would creep in every-thing, where it had a view to obtain a benefit by it; and insult, where it had power, and nothing to expect: that this was not a point now to be determined with me: that I had said as much as I could possibly say on this subject: that this interview was imposed upon me: by those, indeed, who had a right to impose it: but that it was sorely against my will complied with; and for this reason, that there was *aversion*, not *wilfulness*, in the case; and so nothing could come of it, but a pretence, as I much apprehended, to use me still more severely than I had been used.

She was then pleased to charge me with prepossession and prejudice. She expatiated upon the duty of a child. She imputed to me abundance of fine qualities; but told me, that, in this case, *that* of persuadableness was wanting to crown all. She insisted upon the *merit* of obedience, although my will were *not* in it. From a little hint I gave of my still greater dislike to see Mr. Solmes on account of the freedom I had treated him with, she talked to me of his forgiving disposition; of his infinite respect for me; and I cannot tell what of this sort.

I never found myself so fretful in my life: and so I told my aunt; and begged her pardon for it. But she said, it was well disguised then; for she saw nothing but little tremors, which were usual with young ladies when they were to see their admirers for the *first* time; and this might be called so, with respect to me; since it was the first time I had consented to see Mr. Solmes in that light —But that the *next*—

'How, Madam,' interrupted I—'Is 'it then imagined, that I give this 'meeting on that foot?'—

'To be sure it is, child.'

'*To be sure it is*, Madam! Then I 'do yet desire to decline it.—I will 'not, I cannot, see him, if he expects 'me to see him upon those terms.'

'Niceness, punctilio—Mere punctili-'lio, niece!—Can you think that your 'appointment, (day, place, hour) and 'knowing what the intent of it was, is 'to be interpreted away as a mere ce-'remony, and to mean nothing?—Let 'me tell you, my dear, your father, 'mother, uncles, every-body, respect 'this appointment as the first act of 'your compliance with their wills: and 'therefore recede not, I desire you; but 'make a merit of what cannot be 'avoided.'

O the

O the hideous wretch!—'Pardon me, Madam—*I* to be supposed to meet such a man as *that*, with such a view! and *he* to be armed with such an expectation!—But it cannot be that he expects it, whatever *others* may do.—It is plain he cannot, by the fear he tells you all, he shall have to see me. If his *hope* were so audacious, he could not *fear* so much.'

'Indeed, he *has* this hope; and justly founded too. But his fear arises from his reverence, as I told you before.'

'His *reverence!*—his unworthiness! —'Tis so apparent, that even he himself sees it, as well as every-body else. Hence his offers to purchase me! Hence it is, that settlements are to make up for acknowledged want of merit!'

'His *unworthiness*, say you!—Not so fast, my dear. Does not this look like setting a high value upon yourself?—We all have exalted notions of your merit, niece; but nevertheless, it would not be wrong, if you were to arrogate less to yourself; though more were to be your due than your friends attribute to you.'

'I am sorry, Madam, it should be thought arrogance in me, to suppose I am not worthy of a better man than Mr. Solmes, both as to person and mind: and as to fortune, I thank God I despise all that can be insisted upon in his favour from so poor a plea.'

She told me, it signified nothing to talk: I knew the expectation of every-one.

Indeed I did not. It was impossible I could think of such a strange expectation, upon a compliance made only to shew I would comply in all that was in my power to comply with.

I might easily, she said, have supposed, that every-one thought I was beginning to oblige them all, by the kind behaviour of my brother and sister to me in the garden, last Sunday; by my sister's visit to me afterwards in my chamber; (although *both more stiffly received by me*, than were either wished or expected) by my uncle Harlowe's affectionate visit to me the same afternoon, not indeed *so very gratefully received* as I used to receive his favours: —but this he kindly imputed to the displeasure I had conceived at my confinement, and to my intention to come off by degrees, that I might keep myself in countenance for my past opposition.

See, my dear, the low cunning of that Sunday-management, which then so much surprized me! And see the reason why Dr. Lewen was admitted to visit me, yet forbore to enter upon a subject about which I thought he came to talk to me!—For it seems there was no occasion to dispute with me on the point I was to be *supposed* to have conceded to.—See, also, how unfairly my brother and sister must have represented their pretended kindness, when (though they had an end to answer by *appearing* kind) their antipathy to me seems to have been so strong, that they could not help insulting me by their arm-in-arm lover-like behaviour to each other; as my sister afterwards likewise did, when she came to borrow my Kempis.

I lifted up my hands and eyes! 'I cannot,' said I, 'give *this* treatment a name! The *end* so unlikely to be answered by *means* so low! I know *whose* the whole is! He that could get my uncle Harlowe to contribute his part, and procure the acquiescence of the rest of my friends to it, must have the power to do any-thing with them against me.'

Again my aunt told me, that talking and invective, now I had given the expectation, would signify nothing. She hoped I would not shew every-one, that they had been too forward in their constructions of my desire to oblige them. She could assure me, that it would be worse for me, if *now* I receded, than if I had never advanced.

'*Advanced*, Madam! How can you say *advanced?* Why, this is a trick upon me! A poor low trick! Pardon me, Madam, I don't say you have a hand in it.—But, my dearest aunt, tell me, Will not my mother be present at this dreadful interview? Will she not so far favour me? were it but to qualify—'

'*Qualify*, my dear,' interrupted she —your mother, and your uncle Harlowe, would not be present on this occasion for the world.'

'O then, Madam, how can they look upon my consent to this interview as an *advance?*'

My aunt was displeased at this home push. 'Miss Clary,' said she, 'there is no dealing with you. It would be

'happy

'happy for you, and for every-body 'else, were your obedience as ready as 'your wit. I will leave you.'

'Not in anger, I hope, Madam,' interrupted I—'All I meant was, to 'observe, that let the meeting iſſue as 'it may, and as it *muſt* iſſue, it cannot 'be a diſappointment to *any-body*.'

'O Miſs! you ſeem to be a very de'termined young creature. Mr. Solmes 'will be here at your time: and re'member once more, that upon the 'coming afternoon depend the peace of 'your whole family, and your own 'happineſs.'

And ſo ſaying, down ſhe hurried.

Here I will ſtop. In what way I ſhall reſume, or when, is not left to me to conjecture; much leſs determine. I am exceſſively uneaſy!—No good news from your mother, I doubt!—I will depoſit thus far, for fear of the worſt.

Adieu, my beſt, rather, my *only* friend!

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER XXXIII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

TUESDAY EVENING; AND CONTINUED THROUGH THE NIGHT.

WELL, my dear, I am alive, and here! But how long I ſhall be either here, or alive, I cannot ſay. I have a vaſt deal to write; and perhaps ſhall have little time for it. Nevertheleſs, I muſt tell you how the ſaucy Betty again diſcompoſed me, when ſhe came up with this Solmes's meſſage; although, as you will remember from my laſt, I was in a way before that wanted no additional ſurprizes.

'Miſs! Miſs! Miſs!' cried ſhe, as faſt as ſhe could ſpeak, with her arms ſpread abroad, and all her fingers diſtended, and held up, 'Will you be 'pleaſed to walk down into your own 'parlour?—There is every-body, I 'will aſſure you, in full *congregation!* '—And there is Mr. Solmes, as fine as 'a lord, with a charming white peruke, 'fine laced ſhirt and ruffles, coat trimmed with ſilver, and a waiſtcoat ſtanding an end with lace!—Quite handſome, believe me!—You never ſaw 'ſuch an alteration!—Ah! Miſs,' ſhaking her head, 'tis pity you have ſaid 'ſo much againſt him!—But you know 'how to come off for all that!—I hope 'it will not be too late!'

'Impertinence!' ſaid I—'Wert thou 'bid to come up in this fluttering way?' —And I took up my fan, and fanned myſelf.

'Bleſs me!' ſaid ſhe, 'how ſoon 'theſe fine young ladies will be put 'into *fluſterations!*—I meant not either 'to offend or frighten you, I am ſure.'

'Every-body there, do you ſay?— 'Who do you call every-body?'

'Why, Miſs,' holding out her left palm opened, and with a flouriſh, and a ſaucy leer, patting it with the fore-finger of the other, at every mentioned perſon, 'There is your papa!—There 'is your mamma!—There is your uncle Harlowe!—There is your uncle 'Antony!—Your aunt Hervey!—*My* 'young lady!—And my young maſter! '—And Mr. Solmes, with the air of 'a great courtier, ſtanding up, becauſe 'he named you:—"Mrs. Betty," ſaid 'he,' [Then the ape of a wench bowed and ſcraped, as awkwardly as I ſuppoſe the perſon did whom ſhe endeavoured to imitate] "Pray give my humble ſer-"vice to Miſs, and tell her, I wait her "commands."

Was not this a wicked wench?—I trembled ſo, I could hardly ſtand. I was ſpiteful enough to ſay, that her young miſtreſs, I ſuppoſed, bid her put on theſe airs, to frighten me out of a capacity of behaving ſo calmly as ſhould procure me my uncles compaſſion.

'What a way do you put yourſelf 'in, Miſs,' ſaid the inſolent!—'Come, 'dear Madam,' taking up my fan, which I had laid down, and approaching me with it, fanning, 'ſhall I—'

'None of thy impertinence!—But 'ſay you, *all* my friends are below 'with him? And am I to *appear* be-'fore them *all?*'

'I can't tell if they'll ſtay when you 'come. I think they ſeemed to be 'moving when Mr. Solmes gave me his 'orders.—But what anſwer ſhall I 'carry to the 'ſquire?'

'Say, I can't go!—But yet when 'tis over, 'tis over!—Say, I'll wait 'upon—I'll attend—I'll come preſent-'ly—Say any-thing; I care not what '—But give me my fan, and fetch me 'a glaſs of water.'

She went, and I fanned myſelf all the time; for I was in a flame; and hemmed,

hemmed, and ſtruggled with myſelf all I could; and, when ſhe returned, drank my water; and finding no hope preſently of a quieter heart, I ſent her down, and followed her with precipitation; trembling ſo, that, had I not hurried, I queſtion if I could have got down at all.—O my dear, what a poor, paſſive machine is the body when the mind is diſordered!

There are two doors to *my* parlour, as I uſed to call it. As I entered at one, my friends hurried out at the other. I juſt ſaw the gown of my ſiſter, the laſt who ſlid away. My uncle Antony went out with them; but he ſtaid not long, as you ſhall hear: and they all remained in the next parlour, a wainſcot partition only parting the two. I remember them both in one: but they were ſeparated in favour of us girls, for each to receive her viſitors in at her pleaſure.

Mr. Solmes approached me as ſoon as I entered, cringing to the ground, a viſible confuſion in every feature of his face. After half a dozen choaked-up Madams—He was very ſorry—He was very much concerned—It was his misfortune—And there he ſtopped, being unable preſently to compleat a ſentence.

This gave me a little more preſence of mind. Cowardice in a foe begets courage in one's ſelf—I ſee that plainly now—Yet, perhaps, at bottom, the new-made bravo is a greater coward than the other.

I turned from him, and ſeated myſelf in one of the fire-ſide chairs, fanning myſelf. I have ſince recollected, that I muſt have looked very ſaucily. Could I have had any *thoughts* of the man, I ſhould have deſpiſed myſelf for it. But what can be ſaid in the caſe of an averſion ſo perfectly ſincere?

He hemmed five or ſix times, as I had done above; and theſe produced a ſentence—That I could not but ſee his confuſion. This ſentence produced two or three more. I believe my aunt had been his tutoreſs; for it was his awe, his reverence for ſo ſuperlative a lady [I aſſure you!] And he hoped—he hoped—three times he hoped, before he told me what—At laſt it came out, that I was too generous (Generoſity, he ſaid, was my character) to deſpiſe him for ſuch—for ſuch—for ſuch—*true* tokens of his love.

'I do indeed ſee you under ſome con-
'fuſion, Sir; and this gives me hope,
'that although I have been compelled,
'as I may call it, to give way to this
'interview, it may be attended with
'happier effects than I had apprehended
'from it.'

He had hemmed himſelf into more courage.

'You could not, Madam, imagine
'any creature ſo blind to your merits,
'and ſo little attracted by them, as ea-
'ſily to forego the intereſt and appro-
'bation he was honoured with by your
'worthy family, while he had any
'hope given him, that one day he might,
'by his perſeverance and zeal, expect
'your favour.'

'I am but too much aware, Sir, that
'it is upon the intereſt and approba-
'tion you mention, that you build ſuch
'hope. It is impoſſible otherwiſe, that
'a man, who has any regard for his *own*
'happineſs, would perſevere againſt
'ſuch declarations as I have made, and
'think myſelf obliged to make, in juſ-
'tice to you as well as to myſelf.'

He had ſeen many inſtances, he told me, and had heard of more, where ladies had ſeemed as averſe, and yet had been induced, ſome by motives of compaſſion, others by perſuaſion of friends, to change their minds; and had been very happy afterwards: and he hoped this might be the caſe here.

'I have no notion, Sir, of compli-
'ment, in an article of ſuch importance
'as this: yet am I ſorry to be obliged
'to ſpeak my mind ſo plainly, as I am
'going to do. Know then, that I have
'invincible objections, Sir, to your ad-
'dreſs. I have avowed them with an
'earneſtneſs that I believe is without
'example: and why?—Becauſe I be-
'lieve it is without example, that any
'young creature, circumſtanced as I
'am, was ever treated as I have been
'treated on your account.'

'It is hoped, Madam, that your con-
'ſent may in time be obtained—*That*
'is the hope; and I ſhall be a miſerable
'man if it cannot.'

'Better, Sir, give me leave to ſay,
'you were miſerable by yourſelf, than
'that you ſhould make two ſo.'

'You may have heard, Madam,
'things to my diſadvantage. No man
'is without enemies. Be pleaſed to let
'me know *what* you have heard, and
'I will either own my faults, and
'amend; or I will convince you that I
'am

'am basely *bespattered*: and once I understand you overheard something that I should say, that gave you offence: unguardedly, perhaps; but nothing but what shewed my value, and that I would persist so long as I could have hope.'

'I have indeed heard many things to your disadvantage:—and I was far from being pleased with what I overheard fall from your lips: but as you were not any-thing to me, and never could be, it was not for me to be concerned about the one or the other.'

'I am sorry, Madam, to hear this. I am sure you should not tell me of any fault, that I would be unwilling to correct in myself.'

'Then, Sir, correct *this* fault—Do not wish to have a young creature compelled in the most material article of her life, for the sake of motives she despises; and in behalf of a person she cannot value: one that has, in her own right, sufficient to set her above all your offers, and a spirit that craves no more than what it *has*, to make itself easy and happy.'

'I don't see, Madam, how you would be happy, if I were to discontinue my address: for——'

'That is nothing to you, Sir,' interrupted I: 'do you but withdraw your pretensions; and if it be thought fit to start up another man for my punishment, the blame will not lie at your door. You will be entitled to my thanks; and most heartily will I thank you.'

He paused, and seemed a little at a loss: and I was going to give him still stronger and more personal instances of my plain-dealing; when in came my uncle Antony.

'So, niece, so!—Sitting in state like a queen, giving audience! *haughty* audience!—Mr. Solmes, why stand you thus humbly?—Why this distance, man? I hope to see you upon a more intimate footing before we part.'

I arose, as soon as he entered—and approached him with a bent knee: 'Let me, Sir, reverence my uncle, whom I have not for so long time seen!—Let me, Sir, bespeak your favour and compassion.'

'You will have the favour of everybody, niece, when you know how to deserve it.'

'If ever I deserved it, I deserve it now.—I have been hardly used!—I have made proposals that ought to be accepted, and such as would not have been *asked* of me. What have I done, that I must be banished and confined thus disgracefully? That I must not be allowed to have any free-will in an article that concerns my present and future happiness?'

'Miss Clary,' replied my uncle, 'you have had your will in every-thing till now; and this makes your parents wills sit so heavy upon you.'

'My will, Sir! Be pleased to allow me to ask, What was my will till now, but my father's will, and yours and my uncle Harlowe's will?—Has it not been my pride to obey and oblige?—I never asked a favour, that I did not first sit down and consider, if it were *fit* to be granted. And now, to shew my obedience, have I not offered to live single?—Have I not offered to divest myself of my grandfather's bounty, and to cast myself upon my father's; and that to be withdrawn, whenever I disoblige him? Why, dear good Sir, am I to be made unhappy in a point so concerning my happiness?'

'Your grandfather's estate is not wished from you. You are not desired to live a single life. You know *our* motives, and we guess at *yours*. And, let me tell you, well as we love you, we should much sooner chuse to follow you to the grave, than that *yours* should take place.'

'I will engage never to marry any man, without my father's consent, and yours, Sir, and every-body's. Did I ever give you cause to doubt my word?—And here I will take the solemnest oath that can be offered me——'

'That is the matrimonial one,' interrupted he, with a big voice—'And to this gentleman.—It shall, it shall, cousin Clary!—And the more you oppose it, the worse it shall be for you.'

This, and before the man, who seemed to assume courage upon it, highly provoked me.

'Then, Sir, you shall sooner follow me to the grave *indeed*.—I will undergo the cruelest death—I will even consent to enter into the awful vault of my ancestors, and have that bricked up upon me, rather than consent to be

'miserable for life.—And, Mr. Solmes,' turning to him, 'take notice of what I 'say: *this* or *any* death, I will sooner 'undergo, [that will quickly be over] 'than be yours, and for *ever* unhap-'py!'

My uncle was in a terrible rage upon this. He took Mr. Solmes by the hand, shocked as the man seemed to be, and drew him to the window—'Don't be 'surprized, Mr. Solmes, don't be con-'cerned at *this*. We know,' and rapped out a sad oath, 'what women will 'say in their wrath: the wind is not 'more boisterous, nor more change-'able;' and again he swore to that.—'If you think it worth your while to 'wait for such an ungrateful girl as 'this, I'll engage she'll *veer about*; I'll 'engage she *shall*.' And a third time violently swore to it.

Then coming up to me, (who had thrown myself, very much disordered by my vehemence, into the most distant window) as if he would have beat me; his face violently working, his hands clenched, and his teeth set—'Yes, yes, 'yes,' hissed the poor gentleman, 'you 'shall, you shall, you shall, cousin 'Clary, be Mr. Solmes's wife; we will 'see that you shall; and this in one 'week at farthest.'—And then a fourth time he confirmed it!—Poor gentleman! how he swore!

'I am sorry, Sir,' said I, 'to see you 'in such a passion. All this, I am but 'too sensible, is owing to my brother's 'instigation; who would not himself 'give the instance of duty that is sought 'to be exacted from me. It is best for 'me to withdraw. I shall but provoke 'you farther, I fear: for although I 'would gladly obey you if I could, yet 'this is a point determined with me; 'and I cannot so much as *wish* to get 'it over.'

How could I avoid making these strong declarations, the man in presence?

I was going out at the door I came in at; the gentlemen looking upon one another, as if referring to each other what to do, or whether to engage my stay, or suffer me to go; and whom should I meet at the door but my brother, who had heard all that had passed!

He bolted upon me so unexpectedly, that I was surprized. He took my hand, and grasped it with violence: 'Return, 'pretty Miss,' said he; 'return, if you 'please. You shall not yet be *bricked* 'up.—Your *instigating* brother shall 'save you from that!—O thou fallen 'angel!' said he, peering up to my downcast face—'such a sweetness *here!* '—and such an obstinacy *there!*' tapping my neck—'O thou true woman—'though so young!—But you shall not 'have your rake: remember that;' in a loud whisper, as if he would be decently indecent before the man. 'You 'shall be redeemed, and this worthy 'gentleman,' raising his voice, 'will 'be so good as to redeem you from 'ruin—and hereafter you will bless 'him, or have reason to bless him, for 'his *condescension*;' that was the brutal brother's word!

He had led me up to meet Mr. Solmes, whose hand he took, as he held mine. 'Here, Sir,' said he, 'take the rebel 'daughter's hand; I give it you now: 'she shall confirm the gift in a week's 'time; or will have neither father, mo-'ther, nor uncles, to boast of.'

I snatched my hand away.

'How now, Miss!'

'And how now, Sir!—What right 'have *you* to dispose of my hand?—If 'you govern every-body else, you shall 'not govern me; especially in a point 'so immediately relative to myself, and 'in which you neither have, nor ever 'shall have, any-thing to do.'

I would have broken from him; but he held my hand too fast.

'Let me go, Sir!—Why am I thus 'treated?—You *design*, I doubt not, 'with your unmanly gripings, to hurt 'me, as you do:' but again I asked, 'Wherefore is it that I am to be thus 'treated by *you?*'

He tossed my hand from him with a whirl, that pained my very shoulder. I wept, and held my other hand to the part.

Mr. Solmes blamed him. So did my uncle.

He had no patience, he said, with such a perverse one; and to think of the reflections upon himself, before he entered. He had only given me back the hand I had not deserved he should touch. It was one of my arts to pretend to be pained.

Mr. Solmes said, he would sooner give up all his hopes of me, than that I should be used unkindly: and he offered to plead in my behalf to them both; and applied himself with a bow,

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as if for my approbation of his interposition.

'Interpose not, Mr. Solmes,' said I, 'to save me from my brother's violence. I cannot wish to owe an obligation to a man whose ungenerous perseverance is the occasion of *that* violence, and of all my disgraceful sufferings.'

'How generous in you, Mr. Solmes,' said my brother, 'to interpose so kindly in behalf of such an immoveable spirit! I beg of you to persist in your address!'—The unnatural brother called it *address*!—'For all our family's sake, and for *her* sake too, if you love her, persist!—Let us save her, if possible, from ruining herself. Look at her person!' [And he gazed at me, from head to foot, pointing at me, as he referred to Mr. Solmes] 'Think of her fine qualities!—All the world confesses them, and we all gloried in her till now. She is worth saving; and, after two or three more struggles, she will be yours, and take my word for it, will reward your patience. Talk not, therefore, of giving up your hopes, for a little whining folly. She has entered upon a parade, which she knows not how to quit with a *female* grace. You have only her pride and her obstinacy to encounter: and, depend upon it, you will be as happy a man in a fortnight, as a married man *can* be.'

You have heard me say, my dear, that my brother has always taken a liberty to reflect upon our sex, and upon matrimony!—He would not, if he did not think it *wit* to do so!—Just as poor Mr. Wyerley, and others, whom we both know, profane and ridicule Scripture; and all to evince their pretensions to the same pernicious talent, and to have it thought, that they are too wise to be religious.

Mr. Solmes, with a self-satisfied air, presumptuously said, he would suffer every-thing, to *oblige* my family, and to *save* me: and doubted not to be amply rewarded, could he be so happy as to succeed at last.

'Mr. Solmes,' said I, 'if you have any regard for your own happiness, (*mine* is out of the question with you: you have not generosity enough to make *that* any part of your scheme) prosecute no farther your *address*, as my brother calls it. It is but *just* to tell you, that I could not bring my heart so much as to *think* of you, without the utmost disapprobation, *before* I was used as I have been—And can you think I am such a slave, such a *poor* slave, as to be brought to change my mind by the violent usage I have met with?

'And you, Sir,' turning to my brother, 'if you think that *meekness* always indicates *tameness*; and that there is no *magnanimity* without *bluster*; own yourself mistaken for once: for you shall have reason to judge from henceforth, that a generous mind is not to be forced; and that——'

'No more,' said the imperious wretch, 'I charge you,' lifting up his hands and eyes. Then turning to my uncle, 'Do you hear, Sir? This is your once faultless niece! This is your favourite!'

Mr. Solmes looked as if he knew not what to think of the matter; and had I been left alone with him, I saw plainly I could have got rid of him easily enough.

My uncle came to me, looking up also to my face, and down to my feet; 'And is it possible this can be *you*? All this violence from *you*, Miss Clary?'

'Yes, it *is* possible, Sir—And, I will presume to say, this vehemence on my side is but the natural consequence of the usage I have met with, and the rudeness I am treated with, even in your presence, by a brother, who has no more right to controul me, than I have to controul him.'

'This usage, cousin Clary, was not till all other means were tried with you.'

'Tried! to what end, Sir?—Do I contend for any-thing more than a mere negative? You *may*, Sir,' [turning to Mr. Solmes] '*possibly* you may, be induced the *rather* to persevere thus ungenerously, as the usage I have met with for your sake, and what you have now seen offered to me by my brother, will shew you what I *can* bear, were my evil destiny ever to make me yours.'

'Lord, Madam,' cried Solmes, [all this time distorted into twenty different attitudes, as my brother and my uncle were blessing themselves, and speaking only to each other by their eyes, and by their working features;] 'Lord, Madam, what a construction is this!'

'A fair construction, Sir,' interrupted

ed I: 'for he that can see a person whom 'he pretends to value, thus treated, and 'approve of it, must be capable of treating her thus himself. And that you 'do approve of it, is evident by your 'declared perseverance, when you know 'I am confined, banished, and insulted, 'in order to make me consent to be what 'I never *can* be.—And this, let me tell 'you, as I have often told others, not 'from motives of obstinacy, but aversion.

'Excuse me, Sir,' turning to my uncle—'To you, as to my father's brother, I owe duty. I beg *your* pardon, 'that I cannot obey you: but as for my '*brother*, he is *but* my brother; he shall 'not constrain me—and,' [turning to the unnatural wretch—I will call him wretch] 'knit your brows, Sir, and 'frown as you will, I will ask you, 'Would *you*, in my case, make the sacrifices I am willing to make, to obtain every-one's favour? If *not*, what 'right have you to treat me thus; and 'to procure me to be treated as I have 'been for so long a time past?'

I had put myself by this time into great disorder: they were silent, and seemed by their looks to want to talk to one another, walking about in violent disorders too, between whiles. I sat down fanning myself, (as it happened, against the glass) and I could perceive my colour go and come; and being sick to the very heart, and apprehensive of fainting, I rung.

Betty came in. I called for a glass of water, and drank it: but nobody minded me. I heard my brother pronounce the words, 'Art! female art!' to Solmes; which, together with the apprehension that he would not be welcome, I suppose kept *him* back. Else I could see the man was affected. And (still fearing I should faint) I arose, and taking hold of Betty's arm, 'Let me hold by 'you, Betty,' said I: 'let me withdraw.' And moved with trembling feet towards the door, and then turned about, and made a curtsey to my uncle—'Permit me, Sir,' said I, 'to withdraw.'

'Whither go you, niece?' said my uncle: 'we have not done with you yet. 'I charge you depart not. Mr. Solmes 'has something to open to you, that 'will astonish you—And you *shall* hear 'it.'

'Only, Sir, by your leave, for a few 'minutes into the air. I will return, if 'you command it. I will hear all that 'I am to hear; that it may be over *now* 'and *for ever*—You will go with me, 'Betty?'

And so, without any farther prohibition, I retired into the garden; and there, casting myself upon the first seat, and throwing Betty's apron over my face, leaning against her side, my hands between hers, I gave way to a violent burst of grief, or passion, or both; which, as it seemed, saved my heart from breaking, for I was sensible of an immediate relief.

I have already given you specimens of *Mrs.* Betty's impertinence. I shall not, therefore, trouble you with more: for the wench, notwithstanding this my distress, took great liberties with me, after she saw me a little recovered, and as I walked farther into the garden; insomuch that I was obliged to silence her by an absolute prohibition of saying another word to me; and then she dropped behind me sullen and gloomy.

It was near an hour before I was sent for in again. The messenger was my cousin Dolly Hervey, who, with an eye of compassion and respect, (for Miss Hervey always loved me, and calls herself my scholar, as you know) told me, my company was desired.

Betty left us.

'Who commands my attendance, 'Miss?' said I—'Have you not been 'in tears, my dear?'

'Who can forbear tears?' said she.

'Why, what is the matter, cousin 'Dolly?—Sure, nobody is entitled to 'weep in this family, but *me!*'

'Yes, *I* am, Madam,' said she, 'because I love you.'

I kissed her: 'And is it for me, my 'sweet cousin, that you shed tears?—'There never was love lost between us: 'but tell me, what is designed to be 'done with me, that I have this kind 'intimation of your compassion for me?'

'You must take no notice of what I 'tell you,' said the dear girl: 'but my 'mamma has been weeping for you, 'too, with me; but durst not let any-'body see it; "O my Dolly!" said 'my mamma, "there never was so fet a "malice in man as in your cousin James "Harlowe. They will ruin the flower "and ornament of their family."

'As how, Miss Dolly?—Did she

'not

not explain herself?—As how, my dear?'

'Yes; she said, Mr. Solmes would have given up his claim to you: for he said, you hated him, and there were no hopes; and your mamma was willing he should; and to have you taken at your word, to renounce Mr. Lovelace, and to live single: my mamma was for it too; for they heard all that passed between you and uncle Antony, and cousin James; saying, it was impossible to think of prevailing upon you to have Mr. Solmes. Uncle Harlowe seemed in the same way of thinking; at least, my mamma says, he did not say any-thing to the contrary. But your papa was immoveable, and was angry at your mamma and mine upon it: and hereupon your brother, your sister, and my uncle Antony, joined in, and changed the scene entirely. In short, she says, that Mr. Solmes had great matters engaged to him. He owned, that you were the finest young lady in England, and he would be content to be but little beloved, if he could *not*, after marriage, engage your heart, for the sake of having the honour to call you his but for one twelvemonth —I suppose he would break your heart the next—For he is a cruel-hearted man, I am sure.'

'My friends may break my heart, cousin Dolly; but Mr. Solmes will never have it in his power to break it.'

'I do not know that, Miss: you will have good luck to avoid having him, by what I can find; for my mamma says, they are all now of one mind, herself excepted; and she is forced to be silent, your papa and brother are both so outrageous.'

'I am got above minding my brother, cousin Dolly: he is *but* my brother. But to my father I owe duty and obedience, if I could comply.'

We are apt to be fond of any-body that will side with us, when oppressed or provoked. I always loved my cousin Dolly; but now she endeared herself to me ten times more, by her soothing concern for me. I asked what *she* would do, were she in my case?

Without hesitation she replied, Have Mr. Lovelace out-of-hand, and take up her own estate, if she were me; and there would be an end of it—And Mr. Lovelace, she said, was a fine gentleman—Mr. Solmes was not worthy to *buckle his shoes*.

Miss Hervey told me further, that her mother was desired to come to me, to fetch me in; but she excused herself. I should have all my friends, she said, she believed, sit in judgment upon me.

I wish it had been so. But, as I have been told since, neither my father nor my mother would trust themselves with seeing me: the one it seems for passion-sake; my mother for tender considerations.

By this time we entered the house. Miss accompanied me into the parlour, and left me, as a person devoted, I then thought.

Nobody was there. I sat down, and had leisure to weep; reflecting upon what my cousin Dolly had told me.

They were all in my sister's parlour adjoining: for I heard a confused mixture of voices, some louder than others, which drowned the more compassionating accents.

Female accents I could distinguish the drowned ones to be. O my dear! what a hard-hearted sex is the other! Children of the same parents, how came they by their cruelty?—Do they get it by travel?—Do they get it by conversation with one another?—Or how do they get it?—Yet my sister, too, is as hard-hearted as any of them. But this may be no exception neither: for she has been thought to be masculine in her air, and her spirit. She has then, perhaps, a soul of the *other* sex in a body of *ours*.—And so, for the honour of *our own*, will I judge of every woman for the future, who, imitating the rougher manners of men, acts unbecoming the gentleness of her own sex.

Forgive me, my dear friend, for breaking into my story by these reflections. Were I rapidly to pursue my narration, without thinking, without reflecting, I believe I should hardly be able to keep in my right mind: since vehemence and passion would then be always uppermost; but while I *think* as I write, I cool, and my hurry of spirits is allayed.

I believe I was above a quarter of an hour enjoying my own comfortless contemplations, before any-body came in to me; for they seemed to be in full debate. My aunt looked in first, 'O 'my dear!' said she, 'are you there?'

and

and withdrew haſtily to apprize them of it.

And then (as agreed upon I ſuppoſe) in came my uncle Antony, crediting Mr. Solmes with the words, 'Let me 'lead you in, my dear friend,' having hold of his hand; while the new-made beau awkwardly followed, but more edgingly, as I may ſay, ſetting his feet mincingly, to avoid treading upon his leader's heels. Excuſe me, my dear, this ſeeming levity; but thoſe we do not love, appear in every-thing ungraceful to us.

I ſtood up. My uncle looked very ſurly.—'Sit down!—ſit down, girl,' ſaid he—And drawing a chair near me, he placed his *dear* friend in it, whether he would or not, I having taken my ſeat. And my uncle ſat on the other ſide of me.

'Well, niece,' taking my hand, 'we ſhall have very little more to ſay 'to you than we have already ſaid, as 'to the ſubject that is ſo diſtaſteful to 'you—Unleſs, indeed, you have bet-'ter conſidered of the matter—And 'firſt, let me know if you have?'

'The matter wants no conſidera-'tion, Sir.'

'Very well, very well, *Madam!*' ſaid my uncle, withdrawing his hands from mine: 'could I ever have thought 'of this from you?'

'For God's ſake, deareſt Madam,' ſaid Mr. Solmes, folding his hands—And there he ſtopped.

'For God's ſake, *what*, Sir?—How 'came God's ſake, and your ſake, I 'pray you, to be the ſame?'

This ſilenced *him*. My uncle could *only* be angry; and that he was before.

'Well, well, well, Mr. Solmes,' ſaid my uncle, 'no more of ſupplica-'tion. You have not *confidence* enough 'to expect a woman's favour.'

He then was pleaſed to hint what great things he had deſigned to do for me; and that it was more for *my* ſake, after he returned from the Indies, than for the ſake of any *other* of the family, that he had reſolved to live a ſingle life.—'But now,' concluded he, 'that 'the perverſe girl deſpiſes all the great 'things it was once as much in my 'will, as it is in my power, to do for 'her, I will change my meaſures.'

I told him, that I moſt ſincerely thanked him for all his kind intentions to me: but that I was willing to reſign all claim to any *other* of his favours than kind looks and kind words.

He looked about him this way and that.

Mr. Solmes looked pitifully down.

But both being ſilent, I was ſorry, I added, that I had too much reaſon to ſay a very harſh thing, as I might be thought; which was, That if he would but be pleaſed to convince my brother and ſiſter, that he was abſolutely determined to alter his generous purpoſes towards me, it might poſſibly procure me better treatment from both, than I was otherwiſe likely to have.

My uncle was very much diſpleaſed. But he had not the opportunity to expreſs his diſpleaſure, as he ſeemed preparing to do; for in came my brother in exceeding great wrath, and called me ſeveral vile names. His ſucceſs hitherto, in his devices againſt me, had ſet him above keeping even decent meaſures.

Was this my ſpiteful conſtruction? he aſked—Was this the interpretation I put upon his brotherly care of me, and concern for me, in order to prevent my ruining myſelf?

'It *is*, indeed it *is*,' ſaid I: 'I know 'no other way to account for your late 'behaviour to me: and before your 'face, I repeat my requeſt to my uncle, 'and I will make it to my other uncle 'whenever I am permitted to ſee him, 'that they will confer all their favours 'upon you, and upon my ſiſter; and 'only make me happy (it is all I wiſh 'for!) in their kind looks, and kind 'words.'

How they all gazed upon one another!—But could I be leſs peremptory before the man?

'And, as to *your* care and concern 'for me, Sir,' turning to my brother, 'once more I deſire it not. You are '*but* my brother. My father and mo-'ther, I bleſs God, are both living; 'and, were they *not*, you have given 'me abundant reaſon to ſay, that you 'are the very laſt perſon I would wiſh 'to have any concern for me.'

'How, niece! And is a brother, an '*only* brother, of ſo little conſidera-'tion with you, as this comes to? 'And ought he to have no concern for 'his ſiſter's honour, and the family's 'honour?'

'*My* honour, Sir'—I deſire none of 'his concern for that! It never was

'endangered

'endangered till it had his undesired 'concern!—Forgive me, Sir—But 'when my brother knows how to act 'like a brother, or behave like a gen-'tleman, he may deserve more consi-'deration from me than it is possible 'for me now to think he does.'

I thought my brother would have beat me upon this: but my uncle stood between us.

'Violent girl,' however he called me —'Who,' said he, 'would have thought 'it of her?'

Then was Mr. Solmes told, that I was unworthy of his pursuit.

But Mr. Solmes warmly took my part: he could not bear, he said, that I should be treated so roughly.

And so very much did he exert himself on this occasion, and so patiently was his warmth received by my brother, that I began to suspect, that it was a contrivance to make me think myself obliged to him; and that this might perhaps be one end of the pressed-for interview.

The very suspicion of this low artifice, violent as I was thought to be before, put me still more out of patience; and my uncle and my brother again praising his wonderful generosity, and his noble return of good for evil, 'You are a happy man, Mr. Solmes,' said I, 'that you can so *easily* confer 'obligations upon a whole family, ex-'cept upon one ungrateful person of it, 'whom you seem to intend *most* to 'oblige; but who being made unhappy 'by your favour, desires not to owe to '*you* any protection from the violence 'of a brother.'

Then was I a rude, an ungrateful, and unworthy creature.

'I own it all—All, all you can call 'me, or think me, brother, do I own. 'I own my unworthiness with regard 'to this gentleman. I take your word 'for his abundant merit, which I have 'neither leisure nor inclination to ex-'amine into—It may perhaps be as 'great as your own—But yet I can-'not thank him for his mediation: 'for who sees not,' looking at my uncle, 'that this is giving himself a me-'rit with every-body at my expence?'

Then turning to my brother, who seemed surprized into silence by my warmth, 'I must also acknowledge, Sir, 'the favour of *your* superabundant care 'for me. But I discharge you of it; 'at least while I have the happiness of 'nearer and dearer relations. You 'have given me no reason to think 'better of *your* prudence, than of my '*own*. I am independent of *you*, Sir; 'though I never desire to be so of my 'father; and although I wish for the 'good opinion of my uncles, it is *all* 'I wish for from them: and this, Sir, 'I repeat, *to make you and my sister 'easy*.'

Instantly almost came in Betty, in a great hurry, looking at me as spitefully, as if she were my *sister:* 'Sir,' said she to my brother, 'my master de-'sires to speak with you this moment 'at the door.'

He went to that which led into my sister's parlour; and this sentence I heard thundered from the mouth of one who had a right to all my reverence: 'Son James, let the rebel be this mo-'ment carried away to my brother's— 'This very moment—She shall not 'stay one hour more under my roof!'

I trembled; I was ready to sink. Yet, not knowing what I did, or said, I flew to the door, and would have opened it: but my brother pulled it to, and held it close by the key—'O my papa!—my 'dear papa!' said I, falling upon my knees, at the door—'admit your 'child to your presence!—Let me but 'plead my cause at your feet!—O re-'probate not thus your distressed daugh-'ter!'

My uncle put his handkerchief to his eyes: Mr. Solmes made a still more grievous face than he had before. But my brother's marble heart was untouched.

'I will not stir from my knees,' continued I, 'without admission.—At 'this door I beg it!—O let it be the 'door of mercy! and open it to me, 'honoured Sir, I beseech you!—But 'this once, this once! although you 'were afterwards to shut it against me 'for ever!'

The door was endeavoured to be opened on the inside, which made my brother let go the key on a sudden; and I, pressing against it, (all the time remaining on my knees) fell flat on my face into the other parlour; however without hurting myself. But every-body was gone, except Betty, who I suppose was the person that endeavoured to open the door. She helped to raise me up; and when I was on my feet, I looked round

round that apartment, and seeing nobody there, re-entered the other, leaning upon her; and then threw myself into the chair which I had sat in before; and my eyes overflowed to my great relief: while my uncle Antony, my brother, and Mr. Solmes, left me, and went to my other relations.

What passed among them, I know not: but my brother came in by the time I had tolerably recovered myself, with a settled and haughty gloom upon his brow—'Your father and mother 'command you instantly to prepare for 'your uncle Antony's. You need not 'be solicitous about what you shall take 'with you. You may give Betty your 'keys—Take them, Betty, if the perverse one has them about her, and 'carry them to her mother. She will 'take care to send every-thing after 'you that you shall want—But another night you will not be permitted 'to stay in this house.'

'I don't chuse to give my keys to 'any-body, except to my mother, and 'into her own hands. You see how 'much I am disordered. It may cost 'me my life, to be hurried away so 'suddenly. I beg to be indulged till 'next Monday at least.'

'That will not be granted you. 'So prepare for this very night. And 'give up your keys. Give them to '*me*, Miss. I'll carry them to your 'mother?'

'Excuse me, brother. Indeed I 'won't.'

'Indeed you must. Have you any-'thing you are afraid should be seen by 'your mother?'

'Not if I be permitted to attend 'her.'

'I'll make a report accordingly.'

He went out.

In came Miss Dolly Hervey: 'I am 'sorry, Madam, to be the messenger '—But your mamma insists upon your 'sending up all the keys of your cabi-'net, library, and drawers.'

'Tell my mother, that I yield them 'up to her commands: tell her, I make 'no conditions with my mother; but 'if she find nothing she shall disapprove 'of, I beg that she will permit me to 'tarry here a few days longer.—Try, 'my Dolly; [the dear girl sobbing with grief] 'try, if your gentleness 'cannot prevail for me.'

She wept still more, and said, 'It is 'sad, very sad, to see matters thus 'carried!'

She took the keys, and wrapped her arms about me; and begged me to excuse her for her message; and would have said more; but Betty's presence awed her, as I saw.

'Don't pity me, my dear,' said I. 'It will be imputed to you as a fault. 'You see who is by.'

The insolent wench scornfully smiled: 'One young lady pitying another in 'things of this nature, looks promising 'in the youngest I must needs say.'

I bid her be gone from my presence.

She would most gladly go, she said, were she not to stay about me by my mother's order.

It soon appeared for what she staid; for I offering to go up stairs to my apartment when my cousin went from me with the keys, she told me she was commanded (to her very great regret, she must own) to desire me not to go up at present.

Such a bold face as she, I told her, should not hinder me.

She instantly rang the bell, and in came my brother, meeting me at the door.

'Return, return, Miss—No going 'up yet.'

I went in again, and throwing myself upon the window-seat, wept bitterly.

Shall I give you the particulars of a ridiculously spiteful conversation that passed between my brother and me, in the time that he (with Betty) was in office to keep me in the parlour while my closet was searching?—But I think I will not. It can answer no good end.

I desired several times, while he staid, to have leave to retire to my apartment; but was denied. The search, I suppose, was not over.

Bella was one of those employed in it. They could not have a more diligent searcher. How happy it was they were disappointed!

But when my sister could not find the *cunning creature's* papers, I was to stand another visit from Mr. Solmes—preceded now by my aunt Hervey, sorely against her will, I could see that; accompanied by my uncle Antony, in order to keep her steady, I suppose.

But being a little heavy (for it is now past

past two in the morning) I will lie down in my cloaths, to indulge the kind summons, if it will be indulged.

THREE O'CLOCK, WEDNESDAY MORNING.

I COULD not sleep—Only dozed away one half-hour.

My aunt Hervey accosted me thus—'O my dear child, what troubles do 'you give to your parents, and to eve-'ry-body!—I wonder at you!'

'I am sorry for it, Madam.'

'Sorry for it, child!—*Why* then so 'very obstinate?—Come, sit down, my 'dear, I will sit next you;' taking my hand.

My uncle placed Mr. Solmes on the other side of me: himself over-against me, almost close to me. 'Was I not finely beset, my dear?

'Your brother, child,' said my aunt, 'is too passionate—His zeal for *your* 'welfare pushes him on a little too ve-'hemently.'

'Very true,' said my uncle: 'but 'no more of this. We would now be 'glad to see if milder means will do 'with you—Though, indeed, they 'were tried before.'

I asked my aunt, if it were necessary, that that gentleman should be present?

'There is a reason that he should,' said my aunt, 'as you will hear by-'and-by.—But I must tell you, first, 'that, thinking you was a little too 'angrily treated by your brother, your 'mother desired me to try what gentler 'means would do upon a spirit so ge-'nerous as we used to think yours.'

'Nothing can be done, Madam, I 'must presume to say, if this gentle-'man's address be the end.'

She looked upon my uncle, who bit his lip; and looked upon Mr. Solmes, who rubbed his cheek; and shaking her head, 'Good, dear creature,' said she, 'be calm. Let me ask you, if some-'thing would not have been done, had 'you been more gently used, than you 'seem to think you have been?'

'No, Madam, I cannot say it would, 'in this gentleman's favour. You 'know, Madam—you know, Sir,' to my uncle, 'I ever valued myself upon 'my sincerity: and once indeed had the 'happiness to be valued for it.'

My uncle took Mr. Solmes aside. I heard him say, whisperingly, 'She must, 'she shall, still be yours.—We'll see 'who'll conquer, parents or child, un-'cles or niece. I doubt not to be wit-'ness to all this being got over, and 'many a good-humoured jest made of 'this high phrenzy!'

I was heartily vexed.

'Though we cannot find out,' continued he, 'yet we *guess*, who puts her 'upon this obstinate behaviour. It is 'not natural to her, man. Nor would 'I concern myself so much about her, 'but that I know what I say to be 'true, and intend to do great things 'for her.'

'I will hourly pray for that happy 'time,' whispered as audibly Mr. Solmes. 'I never will revive the re-'membrance of what is now so pain-'ful to me.'

'Well, but, niece, I am to tell you,' said my aunt, 'that the sending up 'your keys, without making any con-'ditions, has wrought for you what 'nothing else could have done. That, 'and the not finding any-thing that 'could give them umbrage, together 'with Mr. Solmes's interposition—'

'O Madam, let me not owe an obli-'gation to Mr. Solmes. I cannot repay 'it, except by my *thanks*; and *those* 'only on condition that he will de-'cline his suit.—To my thanks, Sir,' [turning to him] 'if you have a heart 'capable of humanity, if you have any 'esteem for me for my *own* sake, I be-'seech you to entitle yourself!—I be-'seech you do!'

'O Madam,' cried he, 'believe, be-'lieve, believe me, it is impossible. 'While you are single, I *will* hope. 'While that hope is encouraged by so 'many worthy friends, I *must* perse-'vere. I must not slight *them*, Ma-'dam, because you slight *me*.'

I answered him only with a look; but it was of high disdain; and turning from him—'But what favour, dear 'Madam,' [to my aunt] 'has the in-'stance of duty you mention procured 'me?'

'Your mother and Mr. Solmes,' replied my aunt, 'have prevailed, that 'your request to stay here till Monday 'next shall be granted, if you will 'promise to go chearfully then.'

'Let me but chuse my own visitors, 'and I will go to my uncle's house 'with pleasure.'

'Well, niece,' said my aunt, 'we 'must wave this subject, I find. We

'will now proceed to another, which 'will require your utmoſt attention. 'It will give you the reaſon why Mr. 'Solmes's preſence is requiſite.'

'Aye,' ſaid my uncle, 'and ſhew 'you what ſort of a man ſomebody is. '—Mr. Solmes, pray favour us, in 'the firſt place, with the letter you re'ceived from your anonymous friend.'

'I will, Sir.' And out he pulled a letter-caſe, and, taking out a letter, 'It is written in anſwer to one ſent to 'the perſon. It is ſuperſcibed, "*To* "*Roger Solmes, Eſq.*" It begins thus: "*Honoured Sir!*"'

'I beg your pardon, Sir,' ſaid I: 'but what, pray, is the intent of 'reading this letter to me?'

'To let you know what a vile man 'you are thought to have ſet your heart 'upon,' ſaid my uncle, in an audible whiſper.

'If, Sir, it be ſuſpected, that I 'have ſet my heart upon any other, 'why is Mr. Solmes to give himſelf 'any farther trouble about me?'

'Only hear, niece,' ſaid my aunt; 'only hear what Mr. Solmes has to 'read and to ſay to you on this head.'

'If, Madam, Mr. Solmes will be 'pleaſed to declare, that he has no 'view to ſerve, no end to promote, for 'himſelf, I will hear any-thing he 'ſhall read. But if the contrary, you 'muſt allow me to ſay, That it will 'abate with me a great deal of the 'weight of whatever he ſhall produce.'

'Hear it but read, niece,' ſaid my aunt.

'Hear it read,' ſaid my uncle. 'You 'are ſo ready to take part with—'

'With any-body, Sir, that is accuſed 'anonymouſly, and from intereſted 'motives.'

He began to read; and there ſeemed to be a heavy load of charges in this letter againſt the poor criminal: but I ſtopped the reading of it, and ſaid, 'It 'will not be *my* fault, if this vilified 'man be not as indifferent to me, as 'one whom I never ſaw. If he be 'otherwiſe at preſent, which I neither 'own, nor deny, it proceeds from the 'ſtrange methods taken to prevent it. 'Do not let one cauſe unite him and 'me, and we ſhall not be united. If 'my offer to live ſingle be accepted, he 'ſhall be no more to me than *this* gen'tleman.'

Still—'Proceed, Mr. Solmes—Hear 'it out, niece,' was my uncle's cry.

'But to what purpoſe, Sir!' ſaid I—'Has not Mr. Solmes a *view* in this? 'And, beſides, can any-thing worſe 'be ſaid of Mr. Lovelace, than I have 'heard ſaid for ſeveral months paſt?'

'But this,' ſaid my uncle, 'and 'what Mr. Solmes can tell you be'ſides, amounts to the *fulleſt proof*—'

'Was the unhappy man, then, ſo 'freely treated in his character before, '*without* full proof? I beſeech you, 'Sir, give me not *too good* an opinion 'of Mr. Lovelace; as I *may* have, if 'ſuch pains be taken to make him 'guilty, by one who means not his re'formation by it; nor to do good, if 'I may preſume to ſay ſo in this caſe, 'to any-body but himſelf.'

'I ſee very plainly, girl,' ſaid my uncle, 'your prepoſſeſſion, your fond 'prepoſſeſſion, for the perſon of a man 'without morals.'

'Indeed, my dear,' ſaid my aunt, 'you too much juſtify all our appre'henſions. Surprizing! that a young 'creature of virtue and honour ſhould 'thus eſteem a man of a quite oppo'ſite character!'

'Dear Madam, do not conclude 'againſt me too haſtily. I believe 'Mr. Lovelace is far from being ſo 'good as he ought to be: but if every 'man's private life were ſearched into 'by *prejudiced people*, ſet on for that 'purpoſe, I know not whoſe reputa'tion would be ſafe. I love a virtuous 'character, as much in man, as in 'woman. I think it is requiſite, and 'as meritorious, in the one as in the 'other. And, if left to myſelf, I 'would prefer a perſon of ſuch a cha'racter to royalty without it.'

'Why then,' ſaid my uncle—

'Give me leave, Sir—But I may 'venture to ſay, that many of thoſe 'who have eſcaped cenſure, have not 'merited applauſe.

'Permit me to obſerve further, that 'Mr. Solmes himſelf may not be ab'ſolutely faultleſs. I never heard of 'his virtues. Some vices I have heard 'of—Excuſe me, Mr. Solmes, I ſpeak 'to your face—The text about *caſting 'the firſt ſtone* affords an excellent 'leſſon.'

He looked down; but was ſilent.

'Mr. Lovelace may have vices *you* 'have

'have not. You may have others, 'which *he* has not.—I speak not this 'to defend him, or to accuse you. No 'man is bad, no one is good, in *every-* 'thing. Mr. Lovelace, for example, 'is said to be implacable, and to hate 'my friends; that does not make me 'value him the more: but give me 'leave to say, that *they* hate him as 'much. Mr. Solmes has his antipa- 'thies, likewise; very *strong* ones, and 'those to his *own relations*; which I 'don't find to be the other's fault; for 'he lives well with *his*—Yet he may 'have as bad:—worse, pardon me, he 'cannot have, in my poor opinion. 'For what must be the man, who *hates* 'his own flesh?'

'You know not, Madam;
'You know not, niece;
'You know not, Clary;'
} All in one breath.

'I may not, nor do I desire to know 'Mr. Solmes's reasons. It *concerns* not 'me to know them: but the world, 'even the impartial part of it, accuses 'him. If the world is unjust or rash, 'in *one* man's case, why may it not be 'so in *another's*? That's all I mean 'by it. Nor can there be a greater 'sign of want of merit, than where a 'man seeks to pull down another's 'character, in order to build up his 'own.'

The poor man's face was all this time overspread with confusion, twisted, as it were, and all awry, neither mouth nor nose standing in the middle of it. He looked as if he were ready to cry: and had he been capable of pitying me, I had certainly tried to pity him.

They all three gazed upon one another in silence.

My aunt, I saw, (at least I thought so) looked as if she would have been glad she might have appeared to approve of what I said. She but feebly blamed me, when she spoke, for not hearing what Mr. Solmes had to say. He himself seemed not now very earnest to be heard. My uncle said, There was no talking to me. And I should have absolutely silenced both gentlemen, had not my brother come in again to their assistance.

This was the strange speech he made at his entrance, his eyes flaming with anger; 'This prating girl has struck 'you all dumb, I perceive.—Perse- 'vere, however, Mr. Solmes. I have 'heard every word she has said: and I 'know no other method of being even 'with her, than, after she is yours, to 'make her as sensible of your power, 'as she now makes you of her inso- 'lence.'

'Fie, cousin Harlowe!' said my aunt—'Could I have thought a *bro-* 'ther would have said this to a gentle- 'man, of a *sister?*'

'I must tell you, Madam,' said he, 'that *you* give the rebel courage. You 'yourself seem to favour too much the 'arrogance of her sex in her; other- 'wise she durst not have thus stopped 'her uncle's mouth by reflections up- 'on him; as well as denied to hear a 'gentleman tell her the danger she is 'in from a libertine, whose protection, 'as she has plainly hinted, she intends 'to claim against her family.'

'*Stopped my uncle's mouth, by re-* 'flections upon him, Sir!' said I, 'How 'can that be! How *dare* you to make 'such an application as this!'

My aunt wept at his reflection upon her.—'Cousin,' said she to him, 'if '*this* be the thanks I have for my trou- 'ble, I have done: your father would 'not treat me thus—And I *will* say, 'that the hint you gave was an unbro- 'therly one.'

'Not more unbrotherly than all the 'rest of his conduct to me, of late, 'Madam,' said I. 'I see by this 'specimen of his violence, how every- 'body has been brought into his mea- 'sures. Had I any the least apprehen- 'sion of ever being in Mr. Solmes's 'power, this *might* have affected me. '—But you see, Sir,' to Mr. Solmes, 'what a conduct is thought necessary 'to enable you to arrive at your un- 'generous end. You see how my 'brother *courts* for you!'

'I disclaim Mr. Harlowe's violence, 'Madam, with all my soul. I will 'never remind you—'

'Silence, worthy Sir!' said I; 'I 'will take care you never shall have 'the opportunity.'

'Let's violence, Clary,' said my uncle.—'Cousin James, you are as much 'to blame as your sister.'

In then came my sister. 'Brother,' said she, 'you kept not your promise. 'You are *thought* to be to blame with- 'in, as well as here. Were not Mr.

'Solmes's generosity and affection to the girl *well* known, what you have said would be inexcusable. My father desires to speak with you—and with you, aunt—and with you, uncle—and with you, Mr. Solmes, if you please.'

They all four withdrew into the next apartment.

I stood silent, as not knowing presently how to take this intervention of my sister's. But she left me not long at a loss—'O thou perverse thing,' said she, [poking out her angry face at me, when they were all gone, but speaking spitefully low]—'What trouble do you give to us all!'

'You and my brother, Bella,' said I, 'give trouble to yourselves; yet neither you nor he have any business to concern yourselves about me.'

She threw out some spiteful expressions, still in a low voice, as if she chose not to be heard without; and I thought it best to oblige her to raise her tone a little, if I could. If I *could*, did I say? It is easy to make a passionate spirit answer all one's views upon it.

She accordingly flamed out in a raised tone: and this brought my cousin Dolly in to us. 'Miss Harlowe, your company is desired.'

'I will come presently, cousin Dolly.'

But again provoking a severity from me which she could not bear, and calling me names; in once more came Dolly, with another message, that her company was desired.

'Not mine, I doubt, Miss Dolly,' said I.

The sweet-tempered girl burst out into tears, and shook her head.

'Go in before me, child,' said Bella, [vexed to see her concern for me] 'with thy sharp face like a new moon: what dost thou cry for? Is it to make thy keen face look still keener?'

I believe Bella was blamed, too, when she went in; for I heard her say, The *creature* was so provoking, there was no keeping a resolution.

Mr. Solmes, after a little while, came in again by himself, to take leave of me: full of scrapes and compliments; but too well tutored and encouraged, to give me hope of his declining his suit. He begged me not to impute to him any of the severe things to which he had been a sorrowful witness. He besought my compassion, as he called it.

He said, the result was, that he had still hopes given him; and although discouraged by me, he was resolved to persevere, while I remained single.—And such long and such painful services he talked of, as never before were heard of.

I told him in the strongest manner, what he had to trust to.

Yet still he determined to persist.—While I was no man's else, he must hope.

'What!' said I, 'will you still persist, when I declare, as I now do, that my affections are engaged?—And let my brother make the most of it.'

He knew my principles, and adored me for them. He doubted not, that it was in his power to make me happy: and he was sure I would not want the will to be so.

I assured him, that were I to be carried to my uncle's, it should answer no end; for I would never see him; nor receive a line from him; nor hear a word in his favour, whoever were the person who should mention him to me.

He was sorry for it. He must be miserable, were I to hold in that mind. But he doubted not, that I might be induced by my father and uncles to change it.

Never, never, he might depend upon it.

It was richly worth his patience, and the trial.

'At my *expence?*—At the price of all my *happiness*, Sir?'

He hoped I should be induced to think otherwise.

And then would he have run into his fortune, his settlements, his affection—Vowing, that never man loved a woman with so sincere a passion, as he loved me.

I stopped him, as to the first part of his speech; and to the second, of the sincerity of his passion, 'What then, Sir,' said I, 'is your love to one, who must assure you, that never young creature looked upon man with a more sincere disapprobation, than I look upon you? And tell me, what argument can you urge, that this *true* declaration answers not beforehand?'

'Dearest

'Dearest Madam, what can I say?
'—On my knees I beg—'

And down the ungraceful wretch dropped on his knees.

'Let me not kneel in vain, Madam:
'let me not be thus despised.'—And he looked most odiously sorrowful.

'I have kneeled too, Mr. Solmes.
'Often have I kneeled: and I will
'kneel again—Even to *you*, Sir, will
'I kneel, if there be so much merit in
'kneeling; provided you will not be
'the implement of my cruel brother's
'undeserved persecution.'

'If all the services, even to worship
'you, during my whole life—You,
'Madam, invoke and expect mercy;
'yet shew none.'

'Am I to be cruel to myself, to shew
'mercy to you! Take my estate, Sir,
'with all my heart, since you are such
'a favourite in this house!—Only
'leave me *myself*—The mercy you ask
'for, do you shew to others.'

'If you mean to my relations, Ma-
'dam—unworthy as they are, all shall
'be done that you shall prescribe.'

'Who, I, Sir, to find you bowels
'you naturally have not? I to purchase
'*their* happiness by the forfeiture of
'*my own?* What I ask you for, is
'mercy to myself: that, since you seem
'to have some power over my relations,
'you will use it in my behalf. Tell
'them, that you see I cannot conquer
'my aversion to you: tell them, if you
'are a wise man, that you too much
'value your own happiness, to risque
'it against such a determined antipa-
'thy: tell them, that I am unworthy
'of your offers; and that, in mercy to
'yourself, as well as to me, you will
'not prosecute a suit so impossible to be
'granted.'

'I will risque all consequences,' said the fell wretch, rising, with a countenance whitened over, as if with malice, his hollow eyes flashing fire, and biting his under-lip, to shew he could be *manly*. 'Your hatred, Madam, shall be
'no objection with me: and I doubt
'not in a few days to have it in my
'power to shew you—'

'*You* have it in your power, Sir—'

He came well off—'*To shew you*
'more generosity, than, noble as you
'are said to be to others, you shew to me.'

The man's face became his anger: it seems formed to express the passion.

At that instant, again came in my brother—'Sister, sister, sister,' said he, with his teeth set, 'act on the termа-
'gant part you have so newly assumed
'—Most wonderfully well does it be-
'come you. It is but a short one, how-
'ever. Tyranness in your turn, accuse
'others of your own guilt—But leave
'her, leave her, Mr. Solmes: her time
'is short. You'll find her humble and
'mortified enough very quickly. Then,
'how like a little tame fool will she
'look, with her conscience upbraiding
'her, and begging of you [with a whining voice, the barbarous brother spoke] 'to forgive and forget!'

More he said, as he flew out, with a glowing face, upon Shorey's coming in to recal him on his violence.

I removed from chair to chair, excessively frighted and disturbed at this brutal treatment.

The man attempted to excuse himself, as being sorry for my brother's passion.

'Leave me, leave me, Sir,' fanning
'—or I shall faint.' And indeed I thought I should.

He recommended himself to my favour with an air of assurance; augmented, as I thought, by a distress so visible in me; for he even snatched my trembling, my struggling hand; and raviſhed it to his odious mouth.

I flung from him with high disdain: and he withdrew, bowing and cringing; self-gratified, and enjoying, as I thought, the confusion he saw me in.

The wretch is now, methinks, before me; and now I see him awkwardly striding backward, as he retired, till the edge of the opened door, which he ran against, remembered him to turn his welcome back upon me.

Upon his withdrawing, Betty brought me word, that I was permitted to go up to my own chamber: and was bid to consider of every thing: for my time was short. Nevertheless, she believed I might be permitted to stay till Saturday.

She tells me, that although my brother and sister were blamed for being so *hasty* with me, yet when they made *their* report, and my uncle Antony *his*, of *my* provocations, they were all more determined than ever in Mr. Solmes's favour.

The wretch himself, she tells me, pretends to be more in love with me than before; and to be rather delighted than

than discouraged with the conversation that passed between us. He ran on, she says, in raptures, about the grace wherewith I should dignify his board; and the like sort of stuff, either of *his* saying, or of *her* making.

She closed all with a 'Now is your 'time, Miss, to submit with a grace, 'and to make your own terms with 'him:—else, I can tell you, were I 'Mr. Solmes, it should be worse for 'you: and who, Miss, of *our* sex,' proceeded the saucy creature, 'would admire a rakish gentleman, when she 'might be admired by a sober one to 'the end of the chapter?'

She made this further speech to me on quitting my chamber—'You have 'had *amazing* good luck, Miss, I must 'tell you, to keep your writings con'cealed so cunningly. You must needs 'think I know that you are always at 'your pen: and as you endeavour to 'hide that knowledge from me, I do 'not think myself obliged to keep your 'secret. But I love not to aggravate. 'I had rather reconcile by much. 'Peace-making is my talent, and ever 'was. And had I been as much your 'foe, as you imagine, you had not 'perhaps been here now. But this, 'however, I do not say to make a me'rit with you, Miss: for, truly, it will 'be the better for you the sooner every'thing is over with you. And better 'for me, and for every-one else; that's 'certain. Yet one hint I must con'clude with; that your pen and ink '(soon as you are to go away) will 'not be long in your power, I do as'sure you, Miss. And then, having lost '*that* amusement, it will be seen, how 'a mind so active as yours will be able 'to employ itself.'

This hint alarms me so much, that I shall instantly begin to conceal, in different places, pens, ink, and paper; and to deposit some in the ivy summer-house, if I can find a safe place there; and, at the worst, I have got a pencil of black, and another of red-lead, which I use in my drawings; and my patterns shall serve for paper, if I have no other.

How lucky it was, that I had got away my papers! They made a strict search for them; that I can see, by the disorderly manner they have left all my things in: for you know that I am such an observer of method, that I can go to a bit of ribband, or lace, or edging, blindfold. The same in my books; which they have strangely disordered and mismatched; to look *behind* them, and *in* some of them, I suppose. My cloaths too are rumpled not a little. No place has escaped them. To your hint, I thank you, are they indebted for their disappointment.

The pen, through heaviness and fatigue, dropped out of my fingers, at the word *indebted*. I resumed it, to finish the sentence; and to tell you, that I am, *your for-ever obliged and affectionate*

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER XXXIV.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

WEDNESDAY, ELEVEN O'CLOCK, APRIL 5.

I Must write as I have opportunity; making use of my concealed stores: for my pens and ink (all of each that they could find) are taken from me; as I shall tell you more particularly by-and-by.

About an hour ago, I deposited my long letter to you; as also, in the usual place, a billet to Mr. Lovelace, lest his impatience should put him upon some rashness; signifying, in four lines, that the interview was over; and that I hoped my steady refusal of Mr. Solmes would discourage any further applications to me in his favour.

Although I was unable (through the fatigue I had undergone, and by reason of sitting up all night, to write to you; which made me lie longer than ordinary this morning) to deposit my letter to you sooner; yet I hope you will have it in such good time, as that you will be able to send me an answer to it this night, or in the morning early; which, if ever so short, will inform me, whether I may depend upon your mother's indulgence or not. This it behoves me to know as soon as possible; for they are resolved to hurry me away on Saturday next at farthest; perhaps to-morrow.

I will now inform you of all that happened previous to their taking away my pen and ink, as well as of the manner in which that act of violence

was

was committed; and this as briefly as I can.

My aunt, who (as well as Mr. Solmes, and my two uncles) lives here, I think, came up to me, and said, She would fain have me hear what Mr. Solmes had to say of Mr. Lovelace—Only that I might be apprized of some things, that would convince me what a vile man he is, and what a wretched husband he must make. I might give them what degree of credit I pleased; and take them with abatement for Mr. Solmes's interestedness, if I thought fit. But it might be of use to me, were it but to question Mr. Lovelace indirectly upon some of them, that related to *myself*.

I was indifferent, I said, about what he could say of me; as I was sure it could not be to my disadvantage; and as *he* had no reason to impute to me the forwardness which my unkind friends had so causelessly taxed me with.

She said, That he gave himself high airs on account of his family; and spoke as despicably of ours as if an alliance with *us* were beneath him.

I replied, That he was a very unworthy man, if it were true, to speak slightingly of a family, which was as good as his own, 'bating that it was not allied to the peerage: that the dignity itself, I thought, conveyed more shame than honour to descendants, who had not merit to adorn, as well as to be adorned by it: that my brother's absurd pride, indeed, which made him every-where declare, he would never marry but to *quality*, gave a disgraceful preference against ours: but that were I to be assured, that Mr. Lovelace was capable of so mean a pride as to insult us, or value himself on such an accidental advantage, I should think as despicably of his sense, as every-body else did of his morals.

She insisted upon it, that he had taken such liberties; and offered to give some instances, which, she said, would surprize me.

I answered, That were it ever so certain that Mr. Lovelace had taken such liberties, it would be but common justice (so much hated as he was by all our family, and so much inveighed against in all companies by them) to enquire into the provocation he had to say what was imputed to him; and whether the value some of my friends put upon the riches they possess, (throwing perhaps contempt upon every other advantage, and even discrediting *their own* pretensions to family, in order to depreciate *his*) might not provoke him to like contempts. 'Upon the whole, Madam,' said I, 'can you say, that the inveteracy lies not as much on *our* side, as on *his*? Can *he* say any-thing of *us* more disrespectful than *we* say of *him*?—And as to the suggestion, so often repeated, that he will make a bad husband, is it possible for him to use a wife worse than I am used; particularly by my brother and sister?'

'Ah, niece! ah, my dear! how firmly has this wicked man attached you!'

'Perhaps not, Madam. But really, great care should be taken by fathers and mothers, when they would have their daughters of *their* minds in these particulars, not to say things that shall necessitate the child, in honour and generosity, to take part with the man her friends are averse to. But, waving all this, as I have offered to renounce him for ever, I see not why he should be mentioned to me, nor why I should be wished to hear any-thing about him.'

'Well, but still, my dear, there can be no harm to let Mr. Solmes tell you what Mr. Lovelace has said of *you*. Severely as you have treated Mr. Solmes, he is fond of attending you once more: he begs to be heard on this head.'

'If it be proper for me to hear it, Madam—'

'It *is*,' eagerly interrupted she, 'very proper.'

'Has what he has said of *me*, Madam, convinced *you* of Mr. Lovelace's baseness?'

'It has, my dear: and that you ought to abhor him for it.'

'Then, dear Madam, be pleased to let me hear it from *your* mouth: there is no need that I should see Mr. *Solmes*, when it will have double the weight from *you*. What, Madam, has the man dared to say of *me*?'

My aunt was quite at a loss.

At last, 'Well,' said she, 'I see how you are attached. I am sorry for it, Miss. For I do assure you, it will

'signify

'signify nothing. You must be Mrs. Solmes; and that in a very few days.'

'If consent of heart, and assent of voice, be necessary to a marriage, I am sure I never can, nor ever will, be married to Mr. Solmes. And what will any of my relations be answerable for, if they force my hand into his, and hold it there till the service be read, I perhaps insensible, and in fits, all the time!'

'What a romantick picture of a forced marriage have you drawn, niece! Some people would say, you have given a fine description of your own obstinacy, child.'

'My brother and sister would: but you, Madam, distinguish, I am sure, between obstinacy and aversion.'

'*Supposed* aversion may owe it's rise to *real* obstinacy, my dear.'

'I know my own heart, Madam. I wish *you* did.'

'Well, but see Mr. Solmes once more, niece. It will oblige, and make for you, more than you imagine.'

'What should I see him for, Madam?—Is the man fond of hearing me declare my aversion to him?—Is he desirous of having me more and more incense my friends against myself!—*O my cunning, my ambitious brother!*'

'Ah, my dear!'—with a look of pity, as if she understood the meaning of my exclamation—'But must that necessarily be the case?'

'It must, Madam, if they will take offence at me for declaring my stedfast detestation of Mr. Solmes, as a husband.'

'Mr. Solmes is to be pitied,' said she. 'He adores you. He longs to see you once more. He loves you the better for your cruel usage of him yesterday. He is in raptures about you.'

'Ugly creature,' thought I, 'he in raptures!'

'What a cruel wretch must he be,' said I, 'who can enjoy the distress to which he so largely contributes!—But I see, I see, Madam, that I am considered as an animal to be baited, to make sport for my brother and sister, and Mr. Solmes. They are all, all of them, wanton in their cruelty.—*I*, Madam, see the man!—the man so incapable of pity!—Indeed I will not see him, if I can help it.—Indeed I will not.'

'What a construction does your lively wit put upon the admiration Mr. Solmes expresses of you!—Passionate as you were yesterday, and contemptuously as you treated him, he doats upon you for the very severity by which he suffers. He is not so ungenerous a man as you think him: nor has he an unfeeling heart.—Let me prevail upon you, my dear, (as your *father* and *mother* expect it of you) to see him once more, and hear what he has to say to you.'

'How can I consent to see him again, when yesterday's interview was interpreted by you, Madam, as well as by every other, as an encouragement to him? When I myself declared, that if I saw him a *second* time by my own consent, it might be so taken? And when I am determined never to encourage him?'

'You might spare your reflections upon *me*, Miss. I have no thanks either from one side or the other.'

And away she flung.

'Dearest Madam!' said I, following her to the door—

But she would not hear me further; and her sudden breaking from me occasioned a hurry to some mean listener; as the slipping of a foot from the landing-place on the stairs discovered to me.

I had scarcely recovered myself from this attack, when up came Betty—'Miss,' said she, 'your company is desired below-stairs, in your own parlour.'

'By whom, Betty?'

'How can I tell, Miss?—Perhaps by your sister, perhaps by your brother—I know they won't come up-stairs to your apartment again.'

'Is Mr. Solmes gone, Betty?'

'I believe he is, Miss—Would you have him sent for back?' said the bold creature.

Down I went: and to whom should I be sent for, but to my brother and Mr. Solmes? The latter standing sneaking behind the door, so that I saw him not, till I was mockingly led by the hand into the room by my brother. And then I started as if I had beheld a ghost.

'You are to sit down, Clary.'

'And what then, brother?'

'Why

'Why then, you are to put off that 'ſcornful look, and hear what Mr. 'Solmes has to ſay to you.'

'Sent for down to be baited again?' thought I.

'Madam,' ſaid Mr. Solmes, as if in haſte to ſpeak, leſt he ſhould not have an opportunity given him, [and indeed he judged right] 'Mr. Lovelace is a 'declared *marriage-hater*, and has a 'deſign upon your honour, if ever—'

'Baſe accuſer!' ſaid I, in a paſſion, ſnatching my hand from my brother, who was inſolently motioning to give it to Mr. Solmes; 'he has not!—he 'dares not!—But *you* have, if endea-'vouring to force a free mind be to 'diſhonour it!'

'O thou violent creature!' ſaid my brother—'But not gone yet!'—for I was ruſhing away.

'What mean you, Sir,' [ſtruggling vehemently to get away] 'to detain 'me thus againſt my will?'

'You ſhall not go, Violence;' claſping his unbrotherly arms about me.

'Then let not Mr. Solmes ſtay.—'Why hold you me thus? He ſhall 'not for *your own* ſake, if I can help 'it, ſee how barbarouſly a brother can 'treat a ſiſter who deſerves not evil 'treatment.'

And I ſtruggled ſo vehemently to get from him, that he was forced to quit my hand; which he did with theſe words—'Be gone then, Fury!—How 'ſtrong is will!—There is no holding 'her.'

And up I flew to my chamber, and locked myſelf in, trembling, and out of breath.

In leſs than a quarter of an hour, up came Betty. I let her in upon her tapping, and aſking (half out of breath too) for admittance.

'The Lord have mercy upon us!' ſaid ſhe.—'What a *confuſion of a houſe* 'is this! [hurrying up and down, fanning herſelf with her handkerchief] 'Such angry maſters and miſtreſſes!—'Such an obſtinate young lady!—Such 'an humble lover!—Such enraged un-'cles!—Such—O dear!—dear! What 'a topſy-turvy houſe is this!—And all 'for what, trow?—Only becauſe a 'young lady *may* be happy, and will '*not?*—Only becauſe a young lady '*will* have a huſband, and will *not* 'have a huſband? What hurly-burlies 'are here, where all uſed to be peace 'and quietneſs!'

Thus ſhe ran on to herſelf; while I ſat as patiently as I could (being aſſured that her errand was not deſigned to be a welcome one to me) to obſerve when her ſoliloquy would end.

At laſt, turning to me—'I muſt do 'as I am bid. I can't help it—Don't 'be angry with me, Miſs. But I muſt 'carry down your pen and ink: and 'that, this moment.'

'By whoſe order?'

'By your papa's and mamma's.'

'How ſhall I know that?'

She offered to go to my cloſet: I ſtepped in before her: 'Touch it if you 'dare.'

Up came my couſin Dolly—'Ma-'dam!—Madam!' ſaid the poor weeping good-natured creature, in broken ſentences—'You muſt—indeed you 'muſt—deliver to Betty—or to me—'your pen and ink.'

'Muſt I, my ſweet couſin? Then I 'will to you; but not to this bold bo-'dy.' And ſo I gave my ſtandiſh to her.

'I am ſorry, very ſorry,' ſaid Miſs, 'to be the meſſenger: but your papa 'will not have you in the ſame houſe 'with him: he is reſolved you ſhall be 'carried away to-morrow, or Saturday 'at fartheſt. And therefore your pen 'and ink are taken away, that you 'may give nobody notice of it.'

And away went the dear girl, very ſorrowful, carrying down with her my ſtandiſh, and all it's furniture, and a little parcel of pens beſide, which having been ſeen when the great ſearch was made, ſhe was bid to aſk for. As it happened, I had not diminiſhed it, having hid half a dozen crow-quills in as many different places. It was lucky; for I doubt not they had numbered how many were in the parcel.

Betty ran on, telling me, That my mother was now as much incenſed againſt me, as any-body—That my doom was fixed—That my violent behaviour had not left one to plead for me—That Mr. Solmes bit his lip, and muttered, and *ſeemed to have more in his head, than could come out at his mouth*; that was her phraſe.

And yet ſhe alſo hinted to me, that the cruel wretch took pleaſure in ſeeing me; although ſo much to my diſguſt—

And ſo wanted to ſee me again. Muſt he not be a ſavage, my dear?

The wench went on—That my uncle Harlowe ſaid, That now *he* gave me up—That he pitied Mr. Solmes—Yet hoped he would not think of this to my detriment hereafter: That my uncle Antony was of opinion, that I ought to ſmart for it: *And*, for *her* part—And then, as one of the family, ſhe gave her opinion of the ſame ſide.

As I have no other way of hearing any-thing that is ſaid or intended below, I bear ſometimes more patiently than I otherwiſe ſhould do with her impertinence. And indeed ſhe ſeems to be in all my brother's and ſiſter's counſels.

Miſs Hervey came up again, and demanded an half-pint ink-bottle which they had ſeen in my cloſet.

I gave it her without heſitation.

If they have no ſuſpicion of my being able to write, they will perhaps let me ſtay longer than otherwiſe they would.

This, my dear, is now my ſituation. All my dependence, all my hopes, are in your mother's favour. But for that, I know not *what* I might do: for who can tell what will come next?

LETTER XXXV.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

WEDNESDAY, FOUR O'CLOCK IN THE AFTERNOON.

I Am juſt returned from depoſiting the letter I ſo lately finiſhed, and ſuch of Mr. Lovelace's letters as I had not ſent you. My long letter I found remaining there—So you will have both together.

I am concerned, methinks, it is not with you.—But your ſervant cannot always be at leiſure. However, I will depoſit as faſt as I write. I muſt keep nothing by me now; and when I write, lock myſelf in, that I may not be ſurprized now they think I have no pen and ink.

I found in the uſual place another letter from this diligent man: and by it's contents, a confirmation that nothing paſſes in this houſe but he knows it; and that almoſt as ſoon as it paſſes. For this letter muſt have been written before he could have received my billet; and depoſited, I ſuppoſe, when that was taken away; yet he compliments me in it upon aſſerting myſelf (as he calls it) on that occaſion to my uncle and to Mr. Solmes.

He aſſures me, however, that they are more and more determined to ſubdue me.

He ſends me the compliments of his family; and acquaints me with their earneſt deſire to ſee me amongſt them. Moſt vehemently does he preſs for my quitting this houſe, while it is in my power to get away: and again craves leave to order his uncle's chariot-and-ſix to attend my commands at the ſtile leading to the coppice adjoining to the paddock.

Settlements to my own will he again offers. Lord M. and Lady Sarah and Lady Betty to be guarantees of his honour and juſtice. But, if I chuſe not to go to either of thoſe ladies, nor yet to make him the happieſt of men ſo ſoon as it is nevertheleſs his hope that I will, he urges me to withdraw to my own houſe, and to accept of my Lord M. for my guardian and protector till my couſin Morden arrives. He can contrive, he ſays, to give me eaſy poſſeſſion of it, and will fill it with his female relations on the firſt invitation from me; and Mrs. Norton, or Miſs Howe, may be undoubtedly prevailed upon to be with me for a time. There can be no pretence for litigation, he ſays, when I am once in it. Nor, if I chuſe to have it ſo, will he appear to viſit me; nor preſume to mention marriage to me till all is quiet and eaſy; till every method I ſhall preſcribe for a reconciliation with my friends is tried; till my couſin comes; till ſuch ſettlements are drawn as he ſhall approve of for me; and that I have unexceptionable proofs of his own good behaviour.

As to the diſgrace a perſon of my character may be apprehenſive of upon quitting my father's houſe, he obſerves, (too truly I doubt) that the treatment I meet with is in every-one's mouth: yet, he ſays, that the public voice is in my favour: my friends themſelves, he ſays, *expect* that I will do myſelf what he calls, this juſtice: why elſe do they confine me? He urges, that, thus treated, the independence I have a right to will be my ſufficient excuſe, going but

from

from their houſe to my own, if I chuſe that meaſure; or in order to take poſſeſſion of my own, if I do not: that all the diſgrace I *can* receive, they have already given me: that his concern and his family's concern in my honour, will be equal to my own, if he may be ſo happy ever to call me his: and he preſumes, he ſays, to aver, that no family can better ſupply the loſs of my own friends to me than his, in whatever way I ſhall do them the honour to accept of his and their protection.

But he repeats, that, in all events, he will oppoſe my being carried to my uncle's; being well aſſured, that I ſhall be loſt to him for ever, if once I enter into that houſe. He tells me, that my brother and ſiſter, and Mr. Solmes, deſign to be there to receive me: that my father and mother will not come near me till the ceremony is actually over: and that then they will appear, in order to try to reconcile me to my odious huſband, by urging upon me the obligations I ſhall be ſuppoſed to be under from a double duty.

How, my dear, am I driven on one ſide, and invited on the other!—This laſt intimation is but a too probable one. All the ſteps they take ſeem to tend to this! And, indeed, they have declared almoſt as much.

He owns, that he has already taken his meaſures upon this intelligence—But that he is *ſo* deſirous for *my ſake* (I muſt *ſuppoſe*, he ſays, that he owes *them* no forbearance *for their own*) to avoid coming to extremities, that he has ſuffered a perſon, whom they do not ſuſpect, to acquaint them with his reſolutions, as if come at by accident, if they perſiſt in their deſign to carry me by violence to my uncle's; in hopes, that they may be induced from the fear of miſchief which may enſue, to *change* their meaſures: and yet he is aware, that he has expoſed himſelf to the greateſt riſques by having cauſed this intimation to be given them; ſince, if he cannot benefit himſelf by their fears, there is no doubt but they will doubly guard themſelves againſt him upon it.

What a dangerous enterprizer, however, is this man!

He begs a few lines from me by way of anſwer to this letter, either this evening, or to-morrow morning. If he be not ſo favoured, he ſhall conclude, from what he knows of the fixed determination of my relations, that I ſhall be under a cloſer reſtraint than before: and he ſhall be obliged to take his meaſures according to that preſumption.

You will ſee by this abſtract, as well as by his letter preceding this, (for both run in the ſame ſtrain) how ſtrangely forward the difficulty of my ſituation has brought him in his declarations and propoſals; and in his threatenings too: which, but for that, I would not take from him.

Something, however, I muſt ſpeedily reſolve upon, or it will be out of my power to help myſelf.

Now I think of it, I will incloſe his letter, (ſo might have ſpared the abſtract of it) that you may the better judge of all his propoſals, and intelligence; and leſt it ſhould fall into other hands. I cannot forget the contents, although I am at a loſs what anſwer to return*.

I cannot bear the thoughts of throwing myſelf upon the protection of his friends—But I will not examine his propoſals cloſely till I hear from you. Indeed, I have no *eligible* hope, but in your mother's goodneſs. *Here* is a protection I could more *reputably* fly to, than to that of any other perſon: and from hers ſhould be ready to return to my father's, (for the breach then would not be irreparable, as it would be, if I fled to his family;) to *return*, I repeat, on ſuch terms as ſhall ſecure but my *negative*; not my *independence*; I do not aim at that, (ſo ſhall lay your mother under the leſs difficulty;) although I have a right to be put into poſſeſſion of my grandfather's eſtate, if I were to inſiſt upon it—Such a right, I mean, as my brother exerts in the eſtate left *him*; and which nobody diſputes.—God forbid, that I ſhould ever think myſelf freed from my father's *reaſonable* controul, whatever right my grandfather's will has given me! He, good gentleman, left me that eſtate, as a reward of my duty, and not to ſet me above it, as has been unjuſtly hinted to me: and this reflection makes me more fearful of not anſwering the intention of ſo valuable a bequeſt.—

* She accordingly incloſes Mr. Lovelace's letter. But as the moſt material contents of it are given in her abſtract, it is omitted.

a bequeſt.—O that my friends knew but my heart!—Would but think of it as they uſed to do!—For once more, I ſay, if it deceive me not, it is not altered, although theirs are!

Would but your mother permit you to ſend her chariot, or chaiſe, to the bye-place where Mr. Lovelace propoſes Lord M.'s ſhall come, (provoked, intimidated, and apprehenſive, as I am) I would not heſitate a moment what to do. Place me any-where, as I have ſaid before—In a cot, in a garret; any-where—Diſguiſed as a ſervant—or let me paſs as a ſervant's ſiſter—So that I may but eſcape Mr. Solmes on one hand, and the diſgrace of refuging with the family of a man at enmity with my own, on the other; and I ſhall be in ſome meaſure happy!—Should your good mother refuſe me, what refuge, or whoſe, can I fly to?—Deareſt creature, adviſe your diſtreſſed friend.

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I BROKE off here—I was ſo exceſſively uneaſy, that I durſt not truſt myſelf with my own reflections: I therefore went down to the garden, to try to calm my mind, by ſhifting the ſcene. I took but one turn upon the filberd-walk, when Betty came to me. 'Here, 'Miſs, is your papa—Here is your uncle Antony!—Here is my young maſter—and my young miſtreſs, coming 'to take a walk in the garden; and 'your papa ſends me to ſee where you 'are, for fear he ſhould meet you.'

I ſtruck into an oblique path, and got behind the yew-hedge, ſeeing my ſiſter appear; and there concealed myſelf till they were gone paſt me.

My mother, it ſeems, is not well. My poor mother keeps her chamber—Should ſhe be worſe, I ſhould have an additional unhappineſs, in apprehenſion that my reputed undutifulneſs has touched her heart.

You cannot imagine what my emotions were behind the yew-hedge, on ſeeing my father ſo near me. I was glad to look at him through the hedge as he paſſed by: but I trembled in every joint, when I heard him utter *theſe* words: 'Son James, to you—and to Bella—and 'to you, brother,—do I wholly commit 'this matter.' That I was meant, I cannot doubt. And yet, why was I ſo affected; ſince I may be ſaid to have been given up to the cruelty of my brother and ſiſter for many days paſt?

* *

WHILE my father remained in the garden, I ſent my dutiful compliments to my mother, with enquiry after her health, by Shorey, whom I met accidentally upon the ſtairs; for none of the ſervants, except my gaolereſs, dare to throw themſelves in my way. I had the mortification of ſuch a return, as made me repent my meſſage, though not my concern for her health. 'Let her 'not enquire after the diſorders ſhe oc-'caſions,' was the harſh anſwer. 'I 'will not receive any compliments from 'her.'

Very, *very* hard, my dear! Indeed it is very hard.

* *

I HAVE the pleaſure to hear that my mother is already better. A colicky diſorder, to which ſhe is too ſubject. It is hoped it is gone off—God ſend it may!—Every evil that happens in this houſe is owing to me!

This good news was told me, with a circumſtance very unacceptable; for Betty ſaid, ſhe had orders to let me know, that my garden-walks and poultry-viſits were ſuſpected; and that both will be prohibited, if I ſtay here till Saturday or Monday.

Poſſibly this is ſaid by order, to make me go with leſs reluctance to my uncle's.

My mother bid her ſay, if I expoſtulated about theſe orders, and about my pen and ink, that reading was more to the purpoſe, at preſent, than writing: that by the one, I might be taught my duty; that the other, conſidering whom I was believed to write to, only ſtiffened my will: that my needleworks had better be purſued, than my airings; which were obſerved to be taken in all weathers.

So, my dear, if I do not reſolve upon ſomething ſoon, I ſhall neither be able to avoid the intended evil, nor have it in my power to correſpond with you.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT.

ALL is in a hurry below-ſtairs. Betty is in and out like a ſpy. Something is working, I know not what. I am really a good deal diſordered in body as well as mind. Indeed I am quite heart-ſick.

I will go down, though it is almoſt dark, on pretence of getting a little air and compoſure. Robert has my two former,

former, I hope, before now: and I will depoſit this, with Lovelace's incloſed, if I can, for fear of another ſearch.

I know not what I ſhall do!—All is ſo ſtrangely buſy!—Doors clapped to—Going out of one apartment, hurryingly, as I may ſay, into another. Betty in her alarming way, ſtaring, as if of frighted importance; twice with me in half an hour; called down in haſte by Shorey the laſt time; leaving me with ſtill *more* meaning in her looks and geſtures—Yet poſſibly nothing in all this worthy of my apprehenſions.

Here again comes the creature, with her deep-drawn affected ſighs, and her *O dear's! O dear's!*

* *

More dark hints thrown out by this ſaucy creature. But ſhe will not explain herſelf. Suppoſe this pretty buſineſs ends in murder? ſhe ſays; I may rue my oppoſition, as long as I live, for aught ſhe knows. Parents will not be *baffled* out of their children by impudent gentlemen; nor is it fit they ſhould. It may come home to me when I leaſt expect it.

Theſe are the gloomy and perplexing hints this impertinent throws out. Probably they ariſe from the information Mr. Lovelace ſays he has ſecretly permitted them to have (from this vile double-faced agent, I ſuppoſe!) of his reſolution to prevent my being carried to my uncle's.

How *juſtly*, if ſo, may this exaſperate them!—How am I driven to and fro, like a feather in the wind, at the pleaſure of the raſh, the ſelfiſh, and the headſtrong! and when I am as averſe to the proceedings of the one, as I am to thoſe of the other! For although I was induced to carry on this unhappy correſpondence, as I think I ought to call it, in hopes to prevent miſchief; yet indiſcreet meaſures are fallen upon by the raſh man, before I, who am ſo much concerned in the event of the preſent contentions, can be conſulted: and between his violence on one hand, and that of my relations on the other, I find myſelf in danger from both.

O my dear! what is worldly wiſdom but the height of folly?—I, the meaneſt, at leaſt the youngeſt, of my father's family, to thruſt myſelf in the gap between ſuch uncontroulable ſpirits!—To the intercepting perhaps of the deſigns of Providence, which may intend to make theſe hoſtile ſpirits their own puniſhers.—If ſo, what preſumption!—Indeed, my dear friend, I am afraid I have thought myſelf of too much conſequence. But, however this be, *it is good, when calamities befal us, that we ſhould look into ourſelves, and fear.*

If I am prevented depoſiting this and the incloſed, (as I intend to try to do, late as it is) I will add to it as occaſion ſhall offer. Mean time, believe me to be *your ever-affectionate and grateful*

Cl. Harlowe.

Under the ſuperſcription, written with a pencil, after ſhe went down.

My two former are not yet taken away.—I am ſurprized—I hope you are well—I hope all is right betwixt your mother and you.

LETTER XXXVI.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

THURSDAY MORNING, (APRIL 9.)

I Have your three letters. Never was there a creature more impatient on the moſt intereſting uncertainty than I was, to know the event of the interview between you and Solmes.

It behoves me to account to my dear friend, in her preſent unhappy ſituation, for every-thing that may have the leaſt appearance of negligence or remiſſneſs on my part. I ſent Robin in the morning early, in hopes of a depoſit. He loitered about the place till near ten to no purpoſe; and then came away; my mother having given him a letter to carry to Mr. Hunt's, which he was to deliver before three, when only, in the day-time, that gentleman is at home; and to bring her back an anſwer to it. Mr. Hunt's houſe, you know, lies wide from Harlowe Place. Robin but juſt ſaved his time; and returned not till it was too late to ſend him again. I could only direct him to ſet out before day this morning; and, if he got any letter, to ride as for his life to bring it to me.

I lay by myſelf: a moſt uneaſy night I had through impatience; and being diſcompoſed with it, lay longer than uſual. Juſt as I was riſen, in came Kitty,

Kitty, from Robin, with your three letters. I was not a quarter dreſſed; and only ſlipped on my morning-ſacque; proceeding no further till I had read them all through; long as they are: and yet I often ſtopped to rave aloud (though by myſelf) at the deviliſh people you have to deal with.

How my heart riſes at them all! How poorly did they deſign to trick you into an encouragement of Solmes, from the extorted interview!—I am very, very angry at your aunt Hervey—To give up her own judgment ſo tamely!—And, not content to do ſo, to become ſuch an *active* inſtrument in their hands!—But it is ſo like the world!—So like my mother too!—Next to her own child, there is not any-body living ſhe values ſo much as ſhe does you—Yet it is—' Why ſhould we embroil ' ourſelves, Nancy, with the affairs of ' other people?'

'*Other people!*'—How I hate the poor words, where friendſhip is concerned, and where the protection to be given may be of ſo much conſequence to a friend, and of ſo little detriment to one's ſelf!

I am delighted with your ſpirit, however. I expected it not from you. Nor did they, I am ſure. Nor would *you*, perhaps, have exerted it, if Lovelace's intelligence of Solmes's nurſery-offices had not ſet you up. I wonder not that the wretch is ſaid to love you the better for it. What an honour would it be to him to have ſuch a wife? And he can be even with you when you are ſo. He muſt indeed be a ſavage, as you ſay.—Yet he is leſs to blame for his perſeverance, than thoſe of your own family, whom moſt you reverence, for theirs.

It is well, as I have often ſaid, that I have not ſuch provocations and trials; I ſhould perhaps long ago have taken your couſin Dolly's advice—Yet dare I not to touch that key.—I ſhall always love the good girl for her tenderneſs to you.

I know not what to ſay to Lovelace; nor what to think of his promiſes, nor of his propoſals to you. It is certain that you are highly eſteemed by all his family. The ladies are perſons of unblemiſhed honour. My Lord M. is alſo (as men and peers go) a man of honour. I could tell what to adviſe any other perſon in the world to do but you. So much expected from you!—Such a ſhining light!—Your quitting your father's houſe, and throwing yourſelf into the protection of a family, however honourable, that has a man in it, whoſe perſon, parts, declarations, and pretenſions, will be thought to have engaged your warmeſt eſteem—Methinks I am rather for adviſing that you ſhould get privately to London; and not to let either him, or any-body elſe but me, know where you are, till your couſin Morden comes.

As to going to your uncle's, that you muſt not do, if you can help it. Nor muſt you have Solmes, that's certain: not only becauſe of his unworthineſs in every reſpect, but becauſe of the averſion you have ſo openly avowed to him; which every-body knows and talks of; as they do of your approbation of the other. For your reputation-ſake therefore, as well as to prevent miſchief, you muſt either live ſingle, or have Lovelace.

If you think of going to London, let me know; and I hope you will have *time* to allow me a further concert as to the manner of your getting away, and thither, and how to procure proper lodgings for you.

To obtain this *time*, you muſt palliate a little, and come into ſome ſeeming compromiſe, if you cannot do otherwiſe. Driven as you are driven, it will be ſtrange if you are not obliged to part with a few of your admirable punctilios.

You will obſerve from what I have written, that I have not ſucceeded with my mother.

I am extremely mortified and diſappointed. We have had very ſtrong debates upon it. But, beſides the narrow argument of *embroiling ourſelves with other people's affairs*, as abovementioned, ſhe will have it, that it is your duty to comply. She ſays, ſhe was *always* of opinion that daughters ſhould implicitly ſubmit to the will of their parents in the great article of marriage; and that ſhe governed herſelf accordingly in marrying my father; who at firſt was more the choice of her parents than her own.

This is what ſhe argues in behalf of her favourite Hickman, as well as for Solmes in your caſe.

I muſt not doubt, but my mother always governed herſelf by this princi-

ple—

ple—becauſe ſhe *ſays* ſhe did. I have likewiſe another reaſon to believe it; which you ſhall have, though it may not become me to give it—That they did not live ſo very happily together, as one would hope people might do who married preferring each other at the time, to the reſt of the world.

Somebody ſhall fare never the better for this double-meant policy of my mother, I do aſſure you. Such a retroſpection in her arguments to him, and to his addreſs, it is but fit that *he* ſhould ſuffer for *my* mortification in failing to carry a point upon which I had ſet my whole heart.

Think, my dear, if in any way I can ſerve you. If you allow of it, I proteſt I will go off privately with you, and we will live and die together. Think of it. Improve upon my hint, and command me.

A little interruption.—What is breakfaſt to the ſubject I am upon?

* *

LONDON, I am told, is the beſt hiding-place in the world. I have written nothing but what I will ſtand to at the word of command. Women love to engage in knight-errantry, now-and-then, as well as to encourage it in the men. But in your caſe, what I propoſe, will not ſeem to have anything of that nature in it. It will enable me to perform what is no more than a duty in ſerving and comforting a dear and worthy friend, who labours under undeſerved oppreſſion: and you will *ennoble*, as I may ſay, your Anna Howe, if you allow her to be your companion in affliction.

I will engage, my dear, we ſhall not be in town together one month, before we ſurmount all difficulties; and this without being beholden to any men-fellows for their protection.

I muſt repeat what I have often ſaid, That the authors of your perſecutions would not have preſumed to ſet on foot their ſelfiſh ſchemes againſt you, had they not depended upon the gentleneſs of your ſpirit: though now, having gone ſo far, and having engaged *Old* AUTHORITY in it, [Chide me if you will!] neither *he* nor *they* know how to recede.

When they find you out of their reach, and know that I am with you, you'll ſee how they'll pull in their odious horns.

I think, however, that you ſhould have written to your couſin Morden the moment they had begun to treat you diſgracefully.

I ſhall be impatient to hear whether they will attempt to carry you to your uncle's. I remember, that Lord M.'s diſmiſſed bailiff reported of Lovelace, that he had ſix or ſeven companions as bad as himſelf; and that the country was always glad when they left it*. He actually *has*, as I hear, ſuch a knot of them about him now. And, depend upon it, he will not ſuffer them quietly to carry you to your uncle's: and whoſe muſt you be, if he ſucceeds in taking you from them?

I tremble for you but upon *ſuppoſing* what may be the conſequence of a conflict upon this occaſion. Lovelace owes ſome of them vengeance. This gives me a double concern, that my mother ſhould refuſe her conſent to the protection I had ſet my heart upon procuring for you.

My mother will not breakfaſt without me. A quarrel has it's conveniences ſometimes. Yet too much love, I think, is as bad as too little.

* *

WE have juſt now had another pull. Upon my word, ſhe is *exceſſively*—What ſhall I ſay?—*unperſuadable*—I muſt let her off with that ſoft word.

Who was the old Greek, that ſaid, *He* governed Athens; his *wife*, him; and his *ſon*, her?

It was not my mother's fault [I am writing to *you*, you know] that ſhe did not govern my *father*. But I am but a *daughter!*—Yet I thought I was not quite ſo powerleſs when I was ſet upon carrying a point, as I find myſelf to be.

Adieu, my dear!—Happier times muſt come—And that quickly too.—The ſtrings cannot long continue thus overſtrained. They muſt break or be relaxed. In either way, the certainty muſt be preferable to the ſuſpenſe.

One word more!

I think in my conſcience you muſt take one of theſe two alternatives; either to conſent to let us go to London together privately; [In which caſe, I will procure a vehicle, and meet you

* Vol I. Page 16.

at

at your appointment at the ſtile to which Lovelace propoſes to bring his uncle's chariot] or, to put yourſelf into the protection of Lord M. and the ladies of his family.

You have another, indeed; and that is, if you are abſolutely reſolved againſt Solmes, to meet and marry Lovelace directly.

Which ſoever of theſe you make choice of, you will have this plea, both to yourſelf, and to the world, that you are concluded by the ſame uniform principle that has governed your whole conduct, ever ſince the contention between Lovelace and your brother has been on foot: that is to ſay, that you have choſen a leſſer evil, in hope to prevent a greater.

Adieu! and Heaven direct for the beſt my beloved creature, prays *her*

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XXXVII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

THURSDAY, APRIL 6.

I Thank you, my deareſt friend, for the pains you have taken in accounting ſo affectionately for my papers not being taken away yeſterday; and for the kind protection you would have procured for me, if you could.

This kind protection was what I wiſhed for: but my wiſhes, raiſed at firſt by your love, were rather governed by my deſpair of other refuge [having before caſt about, and not being able to determine, what I *ought* to do, and what I *could* do, in a ſituation ſo unhappy] than by a reaſonable hope. For why indeed ſhould any-body embroil themſelves for others, when they can avoid it?

All my conſolation is, as I have frequently ſaid, that I have not, by my own inadvertence or folly, brought myſelf into this ſad ſituation. If I *had*, I ſhould not have dared to look up to any-body with the expectation of protection or aſſiſtance, nor to you for excuſe of the trouble I give you. But nevertheleſs we ſhould not be angry at a perſon's not doing that for ourſelves, or for our friend, which ſhe thinks ſhe ought *not* to do; and which ſhe has it in her option either to *do*, or to *let it alone*. Much leſs have you a right to be diſpleaſed with ſo prudent a mother, for not engaging herſelf ſo warmly in my favour, as you wiſhed ſhe would. If my own aunt can give me up, and that againſt her judgment, as I may preſume to ſay; and if my father and mother, and uncles, who once loved me ſo well, can join ſo ſtrenuouſly againſt me; can *I* expect, or ought *you*, the protection of your mother, in *oppoſition* to them?

Indeed, my dear love, [Permit me to be *very* ſerious] I am afraid I am ſingled out (either for my own faults, or for the faults of my family, or perhaps for the faults of both) to be a very unhappy creature!—*ſignally* unhappy! For ſee you not how irreſiſtible the waves of affliction come tumbling down upon me?

We have been till within theſe few weeks, every one of us, too happy. No croſſes, no vexations, but what we gave ourſelves from the *pamperedneſs*, as I may call it, of our own wills. Surrounded by our heaps and ſtores, hoarded up as faſt as acquired, we have ſeemed to think ourſelves out of the reach of the bolts of adverſe fate. I was the pride of all my friends, proud *myſelf* of *their* pride, and glorying in my ſtanding. Who knows what the juſtice of Heaven may inflict, in order to convince us, that we are not out of the reach of misfortune; and to reduce us to a better reliance, than what we have hitherto preſumptuouſly made?

I ſhould have been very little the better for the *converſation-viſits* which the good Dr. Lewen uſed to honour me with, and for the principles *wrought* (as I may ſay) into my earlieſt mind by my pious Mrs. Norton, founded on her reverend father's experience, as well as on her own, if I could not thus retroſpect and argue, in ſuch a ſtrange ſituation as we are in. *Strange*, I may well call it; for don't you ſee, my dear, that we ſeem all to be *impelled*, as it were, by a perverſe fate, which none of us are able to reſiſt?—And yet all ariſing (with a ſtrong appearance of ſelf-puniſhment) from ourſelves? Do not my parents ſee the hopeful children, from whom they expected a perpetuity of worldly happineſs to their branching family, now grown up to anſwer the *till* now diſtant hope,

hope, ſetting their angry faces againſt each other, pulling up by the roots, as I may ſay, that hope which was ready to be carried into a probable certainty?

Your partial love will be ready to acquit me of *capital* and *intentional* faults:—but oh, my dear! my calamities have humbled me enough to make me turn my gaudy eye inward; to make me look into myſelf.—And what have I diſcovered there?—Why, my dear friend, more *ſecret* pride and vanity than I could have thought had lain in my unexamined heart.

If *I* am to be ſingled out to be the *puniſher* of myſelf and family, who ſo lately was the *pride* of it, pray for me, my dear, that I may not be left wholly to myſelf; and that I may be enabled to ſupport my character, ſo as to be *juſtly* acquitted of wilful and premeditated faults. The will of Providence be reſigned to in the reſt: as *that* leads, let me patiently, and unrepiningly, follow!—I ſhall not live always!—May but my *cloſing* ſcene be happy!

But I will not oppreſs you, my deareſt friend, with further reflections of this ſort. I will take them all into myſelf. Surely I have a mind that has room for them. My afflictions are too ſharp to laſt long. The criſis is at hand. Happier times you bid me hope for. I *will* hope.

* *

BUT yet, I cannot but be impatient at times, to find myſelf thus driven, and my character ſo depreciated and ſunk, that were all the *future* to be happy, I ſhould be aſhamed to ſhew my face in publick, or to look up. And all by the inſtigation of a ſelfiſh brother, and envious ſiſter.

But let me ſtop: let me reflect!—Are not theſe ſuggeſtions the ſuggeſtions of the *ſecret* pride I have been cenſuring? Then, *already* ſo impatient! But this moment ſo reſigned, ſo much better diſpoſed for reflection! Yet it is hard, it is *very* hard, to ſubdue an embittered ſpirit!—In the inſtant of it's trial too!—O my cruel brother!—But now it riſes again.—I will lay down a pen I am ſo little able to govern.—And I will try to ſubdue an impatience, which (if my afflictions are ſent me for corrective ends) may otherwiſe lead me into ſtill more puniſhable errors.

* *

I WILL return to a ſubject, which I cannot fly from for ten minutes together—called upon eſpecially as I am, by your three alternatives ſtated in the concluſion of your laſt.

As to the firſt; to wit, *Your advice for me to eſcape to London*—Let me tell you, that the other hint or propoſal which accompanies it, perfectly frightens me—Surely, my dear, (happy as you are, and indulgently treated as your mother treats you) you cannot mean what you propoſe! What a wretch muſt I be, if, for *one* moment only, I could lend an ear to ſuch a propoſal as this! —*I*, to be the occaſion of making ſuch a mother's (perhaps *ſhortened*) life unhappy to the laſt hour of it!—*Ennoble* you, my dear creature! How muſt ſuch an enterprize (the raſhneſs *publick*, the motives, were they excuſable, *private*) debaſe you!—But I will not dwell upon the ſubject—For your *own* ſake I will not.

As to your ſecond alternative, *To put myſelf into the protection of Lord M. and of the ladies of that family*, I own to you, (as I believe I have owned before) that although to do this would be the ſame thing in the eye of the world as putting myſelf into Mr. Lovelace's protection, yet I think I would do it rather than be Mr. Solmes's wife, if there were evidently no other way to avoid being ſo.

Mr. Lovelace, you have ſeen, propoſes to contrive a way to put me into poſſeſſion of my own houſe; and he tells me, that he will ſoon fill it with the ladies of his family, as my viſitors; —upon my invitation, however, to them. A very inconſiderate propoſal I think it to be, and upon which I cannot explain myſelf to him. What an exertion of independency does it chalk out for me! How, were I to attend to *him*, (and not to the natural conſequences to which the following of his advice would lead me) might I be drawn by *gentle* words into the perpetration of the moſt *violent* acts!—For how could I gain poſſeſſion, but either by legal litigation, which, were I *inclined* to have recourſe to it, (as I never can be) muſt take up time; or by forcibly turning out the perſons whom my father has placed there, to look after the gardens, the houſe, and the

furniture—persons entirely attached to himself, and who, as I know, have been lately instructed by my brother?

Your third alternative, *To meet and marry Mr. Lovelace directly*; a man with whose morals I am far from being satisfied—A step, that could not be taken with the least hope of ever obtaining pardon from or reconciliation with any of my friends; and against which a thousand objections rise in my mind—*That* is not to be thought of.

What appears to me, upon the fullest deliberation, the most eligible, if I *must* be thus driven, is the escaping to London. But I would forfeit all my hopes of happiness in this life, rather than you should go away with me, as you rashly, though with the kindest intention, propose. If I could get safely thither, and be private, methinks I might remain absolutely independent of Mr. Lovelace, and at liberty either to make proposals to my friends, or, should they renounce me, (and I had no other or better way) to make terms with him; supposing my cousin Morden, on his arrival, were to join with my other relations. But they would *then* perhaps indulge me in my choice of a single life, on giving him up: the renewing to them this offer, when at my own liberty, will at least convince them, that I was in earnest when I made it first. And, upon my word, I *would* stand to it, dear as you seem to think, when you are disposed to rally me, it would cost me, *to* stand to it.

If, my dear, you can procure a vehicle for us *both*, you can perhaps procure one for me *singly*: but can it be done without embroiling *yourself* with your mother, or *her* with our family? —Be it coach, chariot, chaise, waggon, or horse, I matter not, provided you appear not to have a hand in my withdrawing. Only, in case it be one of the two latter, I believe I must desire you to get me an ordinary gown and coat, or habit, of some servant; having no concert with any of our own: the more ordinary the better. They must be thrust into the Wood House; where I can put them on; and then slide down from the bank, that separates the Wood Yard from the Green Lane.

But, alas! my dear, this, even *this* alternative, is not without difficulties, which, to a spirit so little enterprizing as mine, seem in a manner insuperable. These are my reflections upon it.

I am afraid, in the first place, that I shall not have time for the requisite preparations for an escape.

Should I be either detected in those preparations, or pursued and overtaken in my flight, and so brought back, then would they think themselves doubly warranted to compel me to have their Solmes: and, conscious of an intended fault, perhaps, I should be the less able to contend with them.

But were I even to get safely to London, I know nobody there but by name; and those the tradesmen to our family; who no doubt would be the first written to and engaged to find me out. And should Mr. Lovelace discover where I was, and he and my brother meet, what mischiefs might ensue between them, whether I were willing or not to return to Harlowe Place!

But supposing I could remain there concealed, to what might not my youth, my sex, and unacquaintedness of the ways of that great, wicked town, expose me!—I should hardly dare to go to church for fear of being discovered. People would wonder how I lived. Who knows but I might pass for a kept-mistress; and that, although nobody came to me, yet, that every time I went out, it might be imagined to be in pursuance of some assignation?

You, my dear, who alone would know where to direct to me, would be watched in all your steps, and in all your messages; and your mother, at present not highly pleased with our correspondence, would then have reason to be *more* displeased; and might not differences follow between her and you, that would make me very unhappy, were I to know them? And this the more likely, as you take it so unaccountably (and, give me leave to say, so ungenerously) into your head, to revenge yourself upon the innocent Mr. Hickman, for all the displeasure your mother gives you?

Were Lovelace to find out my place of abode, that would be the same thing in the eye of the world as if I had actually gone off with him: for would he, do you think, be prevailed upon to forbear visiting me? And then his unhappy character (a foolish man!) would be no credit to any young creature desirous of concealment. Indeed the world,

world, let me escape whither, and to whomsoever I could, would conclude *him* to be the contriver of it.

These are the difficulties which arise to me on revolving this scheme; which, nevertheless, might appear surmountable to a more enterprizing spirit in my circumstances. If you, my dear, think them surmountable in any one of the cases put, [and to be sure I can take no course, but what must have *some* difficulty in it] be pleased to let me know your free and full thoughts upon it.

Had *you*, my dear friend, been married, then should I have had no doubt but that you and Mr. Hickman would have afforded an asylum to a poor creature more than half lost in her own apprehension for want of one kind protecting friend!

You say I should have written to my cousin Morden the moment I was treated disgracefully: but could I have believed that my friends would not have softened by degrees when they saw my antipathy to their Solmes?

I had thoughts indeed several times of writing to my cousin: but by the time an answer could have come, I imagined all would have been over, as if it had never been; so from day to day, from week to week, I hoped on; and, after all, I might as reasonably fear (as I have heretofore said) that my cousin would be brought to side against me, as that some of those I have named would.

And then to appeal to a *cousin* [I must have written with *warmth*, to engage him] against a *father*; this was not a desirable thing to set about. Then I had not, you know, one soul on my side; my mother herself against me. To be sure my cousin would have suspended his judgment till he could have arrived. He might not have been in haste to come, hoping the malady would cure itself: but *had* he written, his letters probably would have run in the qualifying stile; to persuade *me* to submit, or *them* only to relax. Had his letters been more on *my* side than on *theirs*, they would not have regarded them; nor perhaps *himself*, had he come and been an advocate for me; for you see how strangely determined they are; how they have over-awed or got in every-body; so that no one dare open their lips in my behalf. And you have heard that my brother pushes his measures with the more violence, that all may be over with me before my cousin's expected arrival.

But you tell me, that, in order to gain time, I must *palliate*; that I must seem to compromise with my friends: but how *palliate?* how *seem* to compromise? You would not have me endeavour to make them believe, that I will consent to what I never intend to consent to! You would not have me to gain time with a view to *deceive!*

To *do evil, that good may come of it*, is forbidden: and shall I do evil, yet know not whether good may come of it or not?

Forbid it, Heaven! that Clarissa Harlowe should have it in her thought to *serve*, or even to *save* herself at the expence of her sincerity, and by a *studied* deceit!

And is there, after all, no way to escape one great evil, but by plunging myself into another?—What an ill-fated creature am I?—Pray for me, my dearest Nancy!—My mind is at present so much disturbed, that I can hardly pray for myself.

LETTER XXXVIII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE alarming hurry I mentioned under my date of last night, and Betty's saucy dark hints, come out to be owing to what I guessed they were; that is to say, to the private intimation Mr. Lovelace contrived our family should have of his insolent resolution [*insolent* I must call it] to prevent my being carried to my uncle's.

I saw at that time that it was as *wrong* with respect to answering his own view, as it was *insolent*: for could he think, as Betty (I suppose from her betters) justly observed, that parents would be insulted out of their right to dispose of their own child, by a violent man, whom they hate; and who could have no pretension to dispute that right with them, unless what he had from *her* who had none over herself? And how must this insolence of his, aggravated as my brother is able to aggravate it, exasperate them against me?

The raſh man has indeed ſo far gained his point, as to intimidate them from attempting to carry me away: but he has put them upon a ſurer and a more deſperate meaſure; and this has driven me alſo into one *as* deſperate; the conſequence of which, although he could not foreſee it*, may perhaps too well anſwer his great end, little as he deſerves to have it anſwered.

In ſhort, I have done, as far as I know, the moſt raſh thing that ever I did in my life.

But let me give you the motive, and then the action will follow of courſe.

About ſix o'clock this evening, my aunt (who ſtays here all night; on my account, no doubt) came up, and tapped at my door; for I was writing; and had locked myſelf in. I opened it; and ſhe entering, thus delivered herſelf—

'I come once more to viſit you, my 'dear; but ſorely againſt my will; be'cauſe it is to impart to you matters 'of the utmoſt concern to you, and to 'the whole family.'

'What, Madam, is now to be done 'with me?' ſaid I, wholly attentive.

'You will not be hurried away to 'your uncle's, child; let that comfort 'you.—They ſee your averſion to go. '—You will not be obliged to go to 'your uncle Antony's.'

'How you revive me, Madam! 'This is a cordial to my heart!'

I little thought, my dear, what was to follow this ſuppoſed condeſcenſion.

And then I ran over with bleſſings for this good news; (and ſhe permitted me ſo to do, by her ſilence) congratulating myſelf, that I *thought* my father could not reſolve to carry things to the laſt extremity.

'Hold, niece,' ſaid ſhe, at laſt— 'You muſt not give yourſelf too much 'joy upon the occaſion, neither.— 'Don't be ſurprized, my dear.—Why 'look you upon me, child, with ſo af'fecting an earneſtneſs?—But you muſt 'be Mrs. Solmes, for all that.'

I was dumb.

She then told me, that they had had undoubted information, that a certain deſperate *ruffian* (I muſt excuſe her that word, ſhe ſaid) had prepared armed men to way-lay my brother and uncles, and ſeize me, and carry me off. —Surely, ſhe ſaid, I was not conſenting to a violence that might be followed by murder on one ſide or the other; perhaps on both.

I was ſtill ſilent.

That therefore my father (ſtill more exaſperated than before) had changed his reſolution as to my going to my uncle's; and was determined next Tueſday to ſet out thither *himſelf* with my mother; and that (for it was to no purpoſe to conceal a reſolution ſo ſoon to be put in execution)—I muſt not diſpute it any longer—on Wedneſday I muſt give my hand—as they would have me.

She proceeded, That orders were already given for a licence: that the ceremony was to be performed in my own chamber, in preſence of all my friends, except of my father and mother; who would not return, nor ſee me, till all was over, and till they had a good account of my behaviour.

The very intelligence, my dear!—the very intelligence this, which Lovelace gave me!

I was ſtill dumb—Only ſighing, as if my heart would break.

She went on, comforting me, as ſhe thought. She laid before me the merit of obedience; and told me, that if it were my deſire that my Norton ſhould be preſent at the ceremony, it would be complied with: that the pleaſure I ſhould receive from reconciling all my friends to me, and in their congratulations upon it, muſt needs overbalance with ſuch a one as me, the difference of perſons, however, preferable I might think the one man to the other; that love was a fleeting thing, little better than a name, where morality and virtue did not diſtinguiſh the object of it; that a choice made by it's dictates was ſeldom happy; at leaſt not *durably* ſo; nor was it to be wondered at, when it naturally exalted the object above it's merits, and made the lover blind to faults, that were viſible to every-body elſe; ſo that when a nearer intimacy ſtript it of it's imaginary perfections, it left frequently both parties ſurprized, that they could be ſo groſsly cheated;

* She was miſtaken in this. Mr. Lovelace *did* foreſee this conſequence. All his contrivances led to it, and the whole family, as he boaſts, unknown to themſelves, were but ſo many puppets danced by his wires. See Vol. I. p. 93.

and

and that then the indifference became ſtronger than the love ever was. That a woman gave a man great advantages, and inſpired him with great vanity, when ſhe avowed her love for him, and preference of him; and was generally requited with inſolence and contempt: whereas the confeſſedly-obliged man, it was probable, would be all reverence and gratitude—and I cannot tell what.

'You, my dear,' ſaid ſhe, 'believe 'you ſhall be unhappy, if you have 'Mr. Solmes: your parents think the 'contrary; and that you will be un-'doubtedly ſo, were you to have Mr. 'Lovelace, whoſe morals are unqueſ-'tionably bad: ſuppoſe it were your 'ſad lot to be unhappy with either, let 'me beſeech you to conſider, what 'great conſolation you will have on 'one hand, if you purſue your pa-'rents advice, that you did ſo; what 'mortification on the other, that, by 'following your own, you have no-'body to blame but yourſelf.'

This, you remember, my dear, was an argument enforced upon me by Mrs. Norton.

Theſe and other obſervations which ſhe made, were worthy of my aunt Hervey's good ſenſe and experience, and, applied to almoſt any young creature who ſtood in oppoſition to her parents will, but one who had offered to make the ſacrifices I have offered to make, ought to have had their due weight. But although it was eaſy to anſwer ſome of them in my own particular caſe; yet, having over and over, to my mother, *before* my confinement, and to my brother and ſiſter, and even to my aunt Hervey, *ſince*, ſaid what I muſt now have repeated, I was ſo much mortified and afflicted at the cruel tidings ſhe brought me, that however attentive I was to what ſhe ſaid, I had neither power nor will to anſwer one word; and, had ſhe not ſtopped of herſelf, ſhe might have gone on an hour longer, without interruption from me.

Obſerving this, and that I only ſat weeping, my handkerchief covering my face, and my boſom heaving ready to burſt; 'What! no anſwer, my dear? '—Why ſo much *ſilent* grief? You 'know *I* always loved you. You know, 'that *I* have no intereſt in the affair. 'You would not permit Mr. Solmes 'to acquaint you with ſome things 'which would have ſet your heart 'againſt Mr. Lovelace. Shall I tell 'you ſome of the matters charged 'againſt him?—Shall I, my dear?'

Still I anſwered only by my tears and ſighs.

'Well, child, you ſhall be told theſe 'things afterwards, when you will be 'in a better ſtate of mind to hear 'them; and then you will rejoice in 'the eſcape you will have had. It 'will be ſome excuſe, then, for you 'to plead for your behaviour to Mr. 'Solmes, that you could not have be-'lieved Mr. Lovelace had been ſo very 'vile a man.'

My heart fluttered with impatience and anger at being ſo plainly talked to as the wife of this man; but yet I then choſe to be ſilent. If I had ſpoken, it would have been with vehemence.

'Strange, my dear, ſuch ſilence!—'Your concern is infinitely more on 'this ſide the day, than it will be on 'the other.—But let me aſk you, and 'do not be diſpleaſed, Will you chuſe 'to ſee what generous ſtipulations for 'you there are in the ſettlements?—'You have knowledge beyond your 'years—Give the writings a peruſal: 'do, my dear; they are engroſſed, and 'ready for ſigning, and have been for 'ſome time.—Excuſe me, my love—'I mean not to diſorder you:—your 'father would oblige me to bring them 'up, and to leave them with you. He 'commands you to read them. *But* to 'read them, niece—ſince they are en-'groſſed, and *were* before you made 'them abſolutely hopeleſs.'

And then, to my great terror, out ſhe drew ſome parchments from her handkerchief, which ſhe had kept (unobſerved by me) under her apron; and, riſing, put them in the oppoſite window. Had ſhe produced a ſerpent, I could not have been more frighted.

'Oh! my deareſt aunt,' turning away my face, and holding out my hands; 'hide from my eyes thoſe hor-'rid parchments!—Let me conjure you 'to tell me—By all the tenderneſs of 'near relationſhip, and upon your ho-'nour, and by your love for me, ſay, 'Are they abſolutely reſolved, that 'come what will, I muſt be that man's?'

'My dear, you muſt have Mr. 'Solmes: indeed you muſt.'

'Indeed, I never will! This, as I 'have ſaid, over and over, is not ori-

'ginally

'ginally my father's will.—Indeed I 'never will—And that is all I will 'say!'

'It is your father's will *now*,' replied my aunt: 'and, considering how 'all the family is threatened by Mr. 'Lovelace, and the resolution he has 'certainly taken to force you out of 'their hands, I cannot but say they 'are in the right, not to be bullied out 'of their child.'

'Well, Madam, then nothing remains 'for me to say. I am made desperate. 'I care not what becomes of me.'

'Your piety, and your prudence, 'my dear, and Mr. Lovelace's immo'ral character, together with his dar'ing insults, and threatenings, which 'ought to incense *you*, as much as 'any-body, are every one's depen'dence. We are sure the time will 'come, when you'll think very diffe'rently of the steps your friends take 'to disappoint a man who has made 'himself so justly obnoxious to them 'all.'

She withdrew; leaving me full of grief and indignation:—and as much out of humour with Mr. Lovelace as with any-body; who, by his conceited contrivances, has made things worse for me than before; depriving me of the hopes I had of gaining time to receive your advice, and private assistance to get to town; and leaving me no other advice, in all appearance, than either to throw myself upon his family, or to be made miserable for ever with Mr. Solmes. But I was still resolved to avoid both these evils, if possible.

I sounded Betty in the first place, (whom my aunt sent up, not thinking it proper, as Betty told me, that I should be left by myself, and who, I found, knew their designs) whether it were not probable that they would forbear, at my earnest entreaty, to push matters to the threatened extremity.

But she confirmed all my aunt said; rejoicing (as she said they all did) that Mr. Lovelace had given them so good a pretence to save me from him now, and for ever.

She ran on about equipages bespoken; talked of my brother's and sister's exultations that now the whole family would soon be reconciled to each other; of the servants joy upon it; of the expected licence; of a visit to be paid me by Dr. Lewen, or another clergyman, whom they named not to *her*; which was to crown the work; and of other preparations, so particular, as made me dread that they designed to surprize me into a still nearer day than next Wednesday.

These things made me excessively uneasy. I knew not what to resolve upon.

At one time, 'What have I to do,' thought I, 'but to throw myself at 'once into the protection of Lady 'Betty Lawrance?'—But then, in resentment of his *fine* contrivances, which had so abominably disconcerted me, I soon resolved to the contrary: and at last concluded to ask the favour of another half-hour's conversation with my aunt.

I sent Betty to her with my request.

She came.

I put it to her, in the most earnest manner, to tell me, whether I might not obtain the favour of a fortnight's respite?

She assured me, it would not be granted.

Would a week? Surely a week would?

She believed a week might, if I would promise two things: the first, upon my honour, not to write a line out of the house, in that week; for it was still suspected, she said, that I found means to write to *somebody*. And, secondly, to marry Mr. Solmes at the expiration of it.

'Impossible! Impossible!' I said, with passion—What! might not I be obliged with one week, without such a horrid condition as the last?

She would go down, she said, that she might not seem of her own head to put upon me what I thought a hardship so great.

She went down: and came up again.

Did I want, was the answer, to give the vilest of men an opportunity to put his murderous schemes into execution?—It was time for them to put an end to my obstinacy (they were tired out with me) and to his hopes at once. And an end *should* be put on Tuesday or Wednesday next, at farthest; unless I would give my honour to comply with the condition upon which my aunt had been so good as to allow me a longer time.

I even stamped with impatience!—I called upon her to witness, that I was guiltless of the consequence of this compulsion;

compulsion; this *barbarous* compulsion, I called it; let that consequence be what it would.

My aunt chid me in a higher strain than ever she did before.

While I, in a half phrenzy, insisted upon seeing my father: such usage, I said, set me above fear. I would rejoice to owe my death to him, as I did my life.

I did go down half-way of the stairs, resolved to throw myself at his feet wherever he was.—My aunt was frighted. She owned, that she feared for my head.—Indeed I was in a perfect phrenzy for a few minutes—But hearing my brother's voice, as talking to somebody in my sister's apartment just by, I stopt; and heard the barbarous designer say, speaking to my sister, 'This works charmingly, my dear 'Arabella!'

'It does! It does!' said she, in an exulting accent.

'Let us keep it up,' said my brother. —'The villain is caught in his own 'trap!—Now must she be what we 'would have her be.'

'Do you keep my father to it; I'll 'take care of my mother,' said Bella.

'Never fear!' said he.—And a laugh of congratulation to each other, and derision of me, (as I made it out) quite turned my frantick humour into a vindictive one.

My aunt then just coming down to me, and taking my hand, led me up; and tried to soothe me.

My raving was turned into sullenness.

She preached patience and obedience to me.

I was silent.

At last she desired me to assure her, that I would offer no violence to myself.

God, I said, had given me more grace, I hoped, than to permit me to be guilty of so horrid a rashness. I was his creature, and not my own.

She then took leave of me; and I insisted upon her taking down with her the odious parchments.

Seeing me in so ill an humour, and very earnest that she should take them with her, she took them; but said, that my father should not know that she did; and hoped I would better consider of the matter, and be calmer next time they were offered to my perusal.

I revolved after she was gone all that my brother and sister had said. I dwelt upon their triumphings over me; and found rise in my mind a rancour that was new to me; and which I could not withstand.—And putting every-thing together, dreading the near day, what could I do?—Am I in any manner excusable for what I *did* do?—If I shall be condemned by the world, who know not my provocations, may *I* be acquitted by you?—If *not*, I am unhappy indeed!—For this I did.

Having shaken off the impertinent Betty, I wrote to Mr. Lovelace, to let him know, That all that was threatened at my uncle Antony's was intended to be executed *here*. That I had come to a resolution to throw myself upon the protection *of either of his two aunts*, who would afford it me —In short, that by endeavouring to obtain leave on Monday to dine in the Ivy Summer House, I would, if possible, meet him without the garden-door, at two, three, four, or five o'clock on Monday afternoon, as I should be able. That in the mean time he should acquaint me, *whether I might hope for either of those ladies protection*: and if I might, I absolutely insisted that *he should leave me with either, and go to London himself, or remain at Lord M.'s; nor offer to visit me, till I were satisfied that nothing could be done with my friends in an amicable way; and that I could not obtain possession of my own estate*, and leave to live upon it; and particularly, *that he should not hint marriage to me, till I consented to hear him upon that subject*.—I added, that if he could prevail upon one of the Misses Montague to *favour me with her company on the road*, it would make me abundantly more easy in the thoughts of carrying into effect a resolution which I had not come to, although so driven, but with the utmost reluctance and concern; and which would throw such a slur upon my reputation in the eye of the world, as perhaps I should never be able to wipe off.

This was the purport of what I wrote; and down into the garden I slid with it in the dark, which at another time I should not have had the courage to do; and deposited it, and came up again unknown to any-body.

My mind so dreadfully misgave me when I returned, that to divert in some measure my encreasing uneasiness, I had recourse

recourſe to my private pen; and in a very ſhort time ran this length.

And now, that I am come to this part, my uneaſy reflections begin again to pour in upon me. Yet what can I do?—I believe I ſhall take it back again the firſt thing I do in the morning—Yet what *can* I do?

And who knows but they may have a ſtill earlier day in their intention, than that which will too ſoon come?

I hope to depoſit this early in the morning for you, as I ſhall return from reſuming my letter, if I do reſume it as my *inwardeſt* mind bids me.

Although it is now near two o'clock, I have a good mind to ſlide down once more, in order to take back my letter. Our doors are always locked and barred up at eleven; but the ſeats of the leſſer hall-windows being almoſt even with the ground without, and the ſhutters not difficult to open, I could eaſily get out.

Yet why ſhould I be thus uneaſy, ſince, ſhould the letter go, I can but hear what Mr. Lovelace ſays to it? His aunts live at too great a diſtance for him to have an immediate anſwer from them; ſo I can ſcruple going to them till I have invitation. I can *inſiſt* upon one of his couſins meeting me, as I have hinted, and accompanying me in the chariot; and he may not be able to obtain that favour from either of them. Twenty things may happen to afford me a ſuſpenſion at leaſt: why ſhould I be ſo very uneaſy?—When likewiſe I can take back my letter early, before it is probable he will have the thought of finding it there. Yet he owns he ſpends three parts of his days, and has done for this fortnight paſt, in loitering about ſometimes in one diſguiſe, ſometimes in another, beſides the attendance given by his truſty ſervant when he himſelf is not *in waiting*, as he calls it.

But theſe ſtrange forebodings!—Yet I can, if you adviſe, cauſe the chariot he ſhall bring with him to carry me directly for town, whither in my London ſcheme, if you were to approve it, I had propoſed to go: and this will ſave you the trouble of procuring for me a vehicle; as well as prevent any ſuſpicion from your mother of your contributing to my eſcape.

But, ſolicitous of your advice, and approbation too, if I *can* have it, I will put an end to this letter.

Adieu, my deareſt friend, adieu!

LETTER XXXIX.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

FRIDAY MORNING, SEVEN O'CLOCK, (APRIL 7.)

MY aunt Hervey, who is a very early riſer, was walking in the garden, (Betty attending her, as I ſaw from my window this morning) when I aroſe; for after ſuch a train of fatigue and reſtleſs nights, I had unhappily overſlept myſelf: ſo all I durſt venture upon, was, to ſtep down to my poultry-yard, and depoſit mine of yeſterday, and laſt night. And I am juſt come up; for ſhe is ſtill in the garden. This prevents me from going to reſume my letter, as I think ſtill to do; and hope it will not be too late.

I ſaid, I had unhappily overſlept myſelf: I went to bed at about half an hour after two. I told the quarters till five; after which I dropped aſleep, and awaked not till paſt ſix, and then in great terror, from a dream, which has made ſuch an impreſſion upon me, that, ſlightly as I think of dreams, I cannot help taking this opportunity to relate it to you.

Methought my brother, my uncle Antony, and Mr. Solmes, had formed a plot to deſtroy Mr. Lovelace; who diſcovering it, and believing I had a hand in it, turned all his rage againſt me. I thought he made them all fly into foreign parts upon it; and afterwards ſeizing upon me, carried me into a church-yard; and there, notwithſtanding all my prayers and tears, and proteſtations of innocence, ſtabbed me to the heart, and then tumbled me into a deep grave ready dug, among two or three half-diſſolved carcaſes; throwing in the dirt and earth upon me with his hands, and trampling it down with his feet.

I awoke in a cold ſweat, trembling, and in agonies; and ſtill the frightful images raiſed by it, remain upon my memory.

But why ſhould I, who have ſuch *real* evils to contend with, regard *imaginary* ones? This, no doubt, was owing to my diſturbed imagination; huddling together wildly all the frightful ideas which my aunt's communications and diſcourſe, my letter to Mr. Lovelace, my own uneaſineſs upon it, and the apprehenſions

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prehenſions of the dreaded Wedneſday, furniſhed me with.

EIGHT O'CLOCK.

THE man, my dear, has got the letter!—What a ſtrange diligence! I wiſh he mean me well, that he takes ſo much pains!—Yet, to be ingenuous, I muſt own, that I ſhould be diſpleaſed if he took leſs—I wiſh, however, he had been an hundred miles off!—What an advantage have I given him over me!

Now the letter is out of my power, I have more uneaſineſs and regret than I had before. For, till now, I had a doubt, whether it ſhould or ſhould not go: and now I think it ought *not* to have gone. And yet is there any other way than to do as I have done, if I would avoid Solmes? But what a giddy creature ſhall I be thought, if I purſue the courſe to which this letter muſt lead me?

My deareſt friend, tell me, Have I done wrong?—Yet do not *ſay* I have, if you *think* it; for ſhould all the world beſides condemn me, I ſhall have ſome comfort, if *you* do not. The firſt time I ever beſought you to flatter me. That, of itſelf, is an indication that I have done wrong, and am afraid of hearing the truth—O tell me (but yet do not tell me) if I have done wrong!

FRIDAY, ELEVEN O'CLOCK.

MY aunt has made me another viſit. She began what ſhe had to ſay with letting me know, that my friends are all perſuaded that I ſtill correſpond with Mr. Lovelace; as is plain, ſhe ſaid, by hints and menaces he throws out, which ſhew that he is apprized of ſeveral things that have paſſed between my relations and me, ſometimes within a very little while after they have happened.

Although I approve not of the method he ſtoops to take to come at his intelligence, yet it is not prudent in me to clear myſelf by the ruin of the corrupted ſervant, (although his vileneſs has neither my connivance, nor approbation) ſince my doing ſo might occaſion the detection of my own correſpondence; and ſo fruſtrate all the hopes I have to avoid this Solmes. Yet it is not at all unlikely, that this very agent of Mr. Lovelace acts a double part between my brother and him: how elſe can *our family* know (ſo *ſoon* too) his menaces upon the paſſages they hint at?

I aſſured my aunt, that I was too much aſhamed of the treatment I met with, (and that for every-one's ſake as well as for my own) to acquaint Mr. Lovelace with the particulars of that treatment, even were the means of correſponding with him afforded me: that I had reaſon to think, that if he were to know of it from me, we muſt be upon ſuch terms, that he would not ſcruple making ſome viſits, which would give me great apprehenſions. They all knew, I ſaid, that I had no communication with any of my father's ſervants, except my ſiſter's Betty Barnes; for although I had a good opinion of them all, and believed, if left to their own inclinations, that they would be glad to ſerve me; yet, finding by their ſhy behaviour, that they were under particular direction, I had forborne, ever ſince my Hannah had been ſo diſgracefully diſmiſſed, ſo much as to ſpeak to any of them, for fear I ſhould be the occaſion of *their* loſing their places too. They muſt, therefore, account among *themſelves* for the intelligence Mr. Lovelace met with, ſince neither my brother nor ſiſter, (as Betty had frequently, in praiſe of their open hearts, informed me) nor perhaps their favourite Mr. Solmes, were at all careful before whom they ſpoke, when they had any-thing to throw out againſt him, or even againſt *me*, whom they took great pride to join with him on this occaſion.

It was but too natural, my aunt ſaid, for my friends to ſuppoſe, that he had his intelligence (part of it at leaſt) from me; who, thinking myſelf hardly treated, might complain of it, if not to him, to Miſs Howe; which, perhaps, might be the ſame thing; for they knew Miſs Howe ſpoke as freely of them, as they could do of Mr. Lovelace; and muſt have the particulars ſhe ſpoke of, from ſomebody who knew what was done here. That this determined my father to bring the whole matter to a ſpeedy iſſue, leſt fatal conſequences ſhould enſue.

'I perceive you are going to ſpeak 'with warmth,' proceeded ſhe, [*and ſo I was.*] 'For my own part, I am ſure, 'you would not write any-thing, if you 'do write, to enflame ſo violent a ſpi'rit.—But this is not the end of my 'preſent viſit.

'You cannot, my dear, but be con'vinced, that your father will be *obeyed*.

'The more you contend against his will, 'the more he thinks himself obliged to 'assert his authority. Your mother de- 'sires me to tell you, that if you will 'give her the least hopes of a dutiful 'compliance, she will be willing to see 'you in her closet just now, while your 'father is gone to take a walk in the 'garden.'

'Astonishing perseverance!' said I— 'I am tired with making declarations 'and with pleadings on this subject; 'and had hoped, that my resolution be- 'ing so well known, I should not have 'been further urged upon it.'

'You mistake the purport of my 'present visit, Miss,' [looking grave- ly]—'Heretofore you have been *desired* 'and *prayed* to obey and oblige your 'friends. *Entreaty* is at an end: they 'give it up. Now it is *resolved upon*, 'that your father's will *is to be obeyed*; 'as it is fit it should. Some things are 'laid at your door, as if you concur- 'red with Lovelaces's threatened vio- 'lence to carry you off, which your 'mother will not believe. She will tell 'you her own good opinion of you. She 'will tell you how much she still loves 'you; and what she expects of you on 'the approaching occasion. But yet, that 'she may not be exposed to an oppositi- 'on, which would the more provoke 'her, she desires that you will first assure 'her that you go down with a resolu- 'tion to do that with a grace which 'must be done with or without a grace. 'And besides, she wants to give you 'some advice how to proceed in order 'to reconcile yourself to your father, 'and to every-body else. Will you go 'down, Miss Clary, or will you not?'

I said, I should think myself happy, could I be admitted to my mother's presence, after so long a banishment from it; but that I could not wish it upon those terms.

'And this is your answer, niece?'

'It must be my answer, Madam. 'Come what may, I never will have 'Mr. Solmes. It is cruel to press this 'matter so often upon me.—I never 'will have that man.'

Down she went with displeasure. I could not help it. I was quite tired with so many attempts, all to the same purpose. I am amazed that they are not!—So little variation! And no concession on either side!

I will go down and deposit this; for Betty has seen I have been writing. The saucy creature took a napkin, and dipped it in water, and with a sneering air, 'Here, Miss;' holding the wet corner to me.

'What's that for?' said I.

'Only, Miss, one of the fingers of 'your right-hand, if you please to look 'at it.'

It was inky.

I gave her a look; but said nothing.

But lest I should have another search, I will close here.

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER XL.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

FRIDAY, ONE O'CLOCK.

I Have a letter from Mr. Lovelace, full of transports, vows, and promises. I will send it to you inclosed. You'll see how he engages in it for Lady Betty's protection, and for Miss Charlotte Montague's accompanying me. I have nothing to do, but to persevere, he says, and prepare to receive the personal congratulations of his whole family.

But you'll see how he presumes upon my being *his*, as the consequence of throwing myself into that lady's protection.

The chariot-and-six is to be ready at the place he mentions. You'll see as to the slur upon my reputation about which I am so apprehensive, how boldly he argues. Generously enough, indeed, were I to be *his*; and had given him to believe that I would.—But that I have not done.

How one step brings on another with this encroaching sex! How soon may a young creature, who gives a man the least encouragement, be carried beyond her intentions, and out of her own power! You would imagine, by what he writes, that I have given him reason to think that my aversion to Mr. Solmes is all owing to my favour for him.

The dreadful thing is, that, comparing what he writes from his intelligencer of what is designed against me, (though he seems not to know the threatened day) with what my aunt and Betty assure me of, there can be no hope

for

for me, but that I must be Solmes's wife, if I stay here.

I had better have gone to my uncle Antony's at this rate. I should have gained time, at least, by it. This is the fruit of his fine contrivances!

What we are to do, and how good he is to be: how I am to direct all his future steps. All this shews, as I said before, that he is sure of me.

However, I have replied to the following effect: That although I had given him room to expect, that I would put myself into the *protection of one of the ladies of his family*; yet as I have three days to come, between this and Monday, and as I still hope that my friends will relent, or that Mr. Solmes will give up a point they will find it impossible to carry; I shall not look upon myself as *absolutely bound by the appointment*: and expect, therefore, if I recede, that I shall not again be called to account for it by him. That I think it necessary to acquaint him, that if by throwing myself upon Lady Betty Lawrance's protection, as he proposed, he understands, *that I mean directly to put myself into his power, he is very much mistaken*: for that there are *many points in which I must be satisfied*; *several matters to be adjusted*, even after I have left this house, (if I *do* leave it) *before I can think of giving him any particular encouragement*: that in the *first place* he must expect that I will do my utmost to *procure my father's reconciliation and approbation of my future steps*; and that *I will govern myself entirely by his commands*, in every reasonable point, *as much as if I had not left his house*: that if he imagines, I shall not reserve to myself this liberty, but that my withdrawing is to give him any advantages which he would *not otherwise have had*; I am determined to stay where I am, and abide the event, in hopes that my friends will still accept of my reiterated promise, *Never to marry him, or any-body else, without their consent*.

This I will deposit as soon as I can. And as he thinks things are near their crisis, I dare say it will not be long before I have an answer to it.

FRIDAY, FOUR O'CLOCK.

I AM really ill. I was used to make the best of any little accidents that befel me, for fear of making my *then* affectionate friends uneasy: but now I shall make the worst of my indisposition, in hopes to obtain a suspension of the threatened evil of Wednesday next. And if I do obtain it, will postpone my appointment with Mr. Lovelace.

Betty has told them that I am very much indisposed. But I have no pity from any-body.

I believe, I am become the object of every-one's aversion; and that they would all be glad I were dead. Indeed, I believe it. 'What ails the perverse 'creature?' cries one.—'Is she love-'sick?' another.

I was in the Ivy Summer House, and came out shivering with cold, as if aguishly affected. Betty observed this, and reported it.—'O, no matter!—Let 'her shiver on!—Cold cannot hurt her. 'Obstinacy will defend her from harm. 'Perverseness is a bracer to a love-sick 'girl, and more effectual than the cold-'bath to make hardy, although the con-'stitution be ever so tender.'

This said by a cruel brother, and heard said by the dearer friends of one, for whom, but a few months ago, every-body was apprehensive at the least blast of wind to which she exposed herself!

Betty, it must be owned, has an admirable memory on these occasions. Nothing of this nature is lost by her repetition: even the very air with which she repeats what she hears said, renders it unnecessary to ask, Who spoke this or that severe thing?

FRIDAY, SIX O'CLOCK.

MY aunt, who again stays all night, has just left me. She came to tell me the result of my friends deliberations about me. It is this:

Next Wednesday morning they are all to be assembled: to wit, my father, mother, my uncles, herself, and my uncle Hervey; my brother and sister of course; my good Mrs. Norton is likewise to be admitted; and Dr. Lewen is to be at hand, to exhort me, it seems, if there be occasion; but my aunt is not certain whether he is to be among them, or to tarry till called in.

When this awful court is assembled, the poor prisoner is to be brought in, supported by Mrs. Norton; who is to be first tutored to instruct me in the duty of a child; which it seems I have forgotten.

Nor is the success at all doubted, my aunt says: since it is not believed that

I can be hardened enough to withſtand the expoſtulations of ſo venerable a judicature, although I have withſtood thoſe of ſeveral of them ſeparately. And ſtill the leſs, as ſhe hints at *extraordinary condeſcenſions from my father*. But what condeſcenſions, from even my father, can induce me to make ſuch a ſacrifice as is expected from me?

Yet my ſpirits will never bear up, I doubt, at ſuch a tribunal—My father preſiding in it.

Indeed I expected, that my trials would not be at an end till he had admitted me into his awful preſence.

What is hoped from me, ſhe ſays, is, that I will chearfully, on Tueſday night, if not before, ſign the articles; and ſo turn the ſucceeding day's ſolemn convention into a day of feſtivity. I am to have the licence ſent me up, however, and once more the ſettlements, that I may ſee how much in earneſt they are.

She further hinted, that my father himſelf would bring up the ſettlements for me to ſign.

O my dear! what a trial will this be!—How ſhall I be able to refuſe to my father the writing of my name?—To my father, from whoſe preſence I have been ſo long baniſhed!—He commanding and entreating, perhaps, in a breath!—How ſhall I be able to refuſe this to my father!

They are ſure, ſhe ſays, ſomething is working on Mr. Lovelace's part, and perhaps on mine: and my father would ſooner follow me to the grave, than ſee me *his* wife.

I ſaid, I was not well: that the very apprehenſions of theſe trials were already inſupportable to me; and would encreaſe upon me, as the time approached; and I was afraid I ſhould be extremely ill.

They had prepared themſelves for ſuch an *artifice* as that, was my aunt's unkind word; and ſhe could aſſure me, it would ſtand me in no ſtead.

'*Artifice!*' repeated I: 'and this 'from my aunt Hervey?'

'Why, my dear,' ſaid ſhe, 'do you 'think people are fools?—Can they 'not ſee, how diſmally you endeavour 'to ſigh yourſelf down within doors?—'How you hang down your *ſweet face*' [thoſe were the words ſhe was pleaſed to uſe] 'upon your boſom—How your 'totter, as it were, and hold by this 'chair, and by that door-poſt, when 'you know that any-body ſees you.' [This, my dear Miſs Howe, is an aſperſion to faſten hypocriſy and contempt upon me: my brother's or ſiſter's aſperſion!—I am not capable of arts ſo low.] 'But the moment you are down 'with your poultry, or advancing upon 'your garden-walk, and, as you imagine, out of every-body's ſight, it is 'ſeen how nimbly you trip along; and 'what an alertneſs governs all your 'motions.'

'I ſhould hate myſelf,' ſaid I, 'were 'I capable of ſuch poor *artifices* as 'theſe. I muſt be a fool to uſe them, 'as well as a mean creature; for have 'I not had experience enough, that my 'friends are incapable of being moved 'in much more *affecting inſtances!*—'But you'll ſee how I ſhall be by Tueſday.'

'My dear, you will not offer any 'violence to your health?—I hope God 'has given you more grace than to do 'that.'

'I hope he has, Madam. But there 'is violence enough offered, and threatened, to affect my health; and ſo it 'will be found, without my needing 'to have recourſe to any other, or to '*artifice* either.'

'I'll only tell you one thing, my 'dear: and that is; Ill or well, the ceremony will probably be performed before Wedneſday night—But this, 'alſo, I will tell you, although beyond 'my preſent commiſſion, that Mr. 'Solmes will be under an engagement, '(if you ſhould require it of him as a 'favour) after the ceremony is paſſed, 'and Lovelace's hopes thereby utterly 'extinguiſhed, to leave you at your father's, and return to his own houſe 'every evening, until you are brought 'to a full ſenſe of your duty, and conſent to acknowledge your change of 'name.'

There was no opening of my lips to ſuch a ſpeech as this. I was dumb.

And theſe, my dear Miſs Howe, are they, who, *ſome* of them at leaſt, have called me a romantick girl!—This is my chimerical brother, and wiſe ſiſter; both joining their heads together, I dare ſay. And yet, my aunt told me, that the laſt part was what took in my mother; who had, till that expedient was found out, inſiſted, that her child ſhould

not

not be married, if, through grief or opposition, she should be ill, or fall into fits.

This intended violence my aunt often excused, by the certain information they pretended to have, of some plots or machinations, that were ready to break out, from Mr. Lovelace*: the effects of which were thus cunningly to be frustrated.

FRIDAY, NINE O'CLOCK.

And now, my dear, what shall I conclude upon? You see how determined—But how can I expect your advice will come time enough to stand me in any stead? For here I have been down, and already have another letter from Mr. Lovelace, [*the man lives upon the spot, I think:*] and I must write to him, either that I will or will not stand to my first resolution of escaping hence on Monday next. If I let him know, that I will not, (appearances so strong *against* him, and *for* Solmes, even stronger than when I made the appointment) will it not be justly deemed my own fault, if I am compelled to marry their odious man? And if any mischief ensue from Mr. Lovelace's rage and disappointment, will it not lie at my door?—Yet, he offers so fair!—Yet, on the other hand, to incur the censure of the world, as a giddy creature—But that, as he hints, I have already incurred—What can I do?—O that my cousin Morden—But what signifies wishing?

I will here give you the substance of Mr. Lovelace's letter. The letter itself I will send, when I have answered it; but that I will defer doing as long as I can, in hopes of finding reason to retract an appointment on which so much depends. And yet it is necessary you should have all before you as I go along, that you may be the better able to advise me in this dreadful crisis.

He begs my pardon for writing with so much assurance; attributing it to his unbounded transport; and entirely acquiesces in my will. He is full of alternatives and proposals. He offers *to attend me directly to Lady Betty's*; or, if I had rather, *to my own estate*; and that my Lord M. shall protect me there; [he knows not, my dear, my reasons for rejecting this inconsiderate advice.] In either case, as soon as he sees me safe, he will go up to London, or whither I please; and not come near me, but by my own permission; and till I am satisfied in every-thing I am doubtful of, as well with regard to his reformation, as to settlements, &c.

To *conduct me to you*, my dear, is another of his proposals, not doubting, he says, but your mother will receive me†: or, if that be not agreeable to you, or to your mother, or to me, he will put me *into Mr. Hickman's* protection; whom, no doubt, he says, you can influence; and that it may be given out, that I am gone to Bath, or Bristol, or abroad; wherever I please.

Again, if it be more agreeable, he proposes *to attend me privately to London*, where he will procure handsome lodgings for me; and *both his cousins Montague to receive me in them, and to accompany me till all shall be adjusted to my mind*; and *till a reconciliation shall be effected*; which he assures me nothing shall be wanting in him to facilitate; greatly as he been insulted by all my family.

These several measures he proposes to my choice; as it was unlikely, he says, that he could procure, *in the time*, a letter from Lady Betty, under her own hand, to invite me in form to her house, unless he had been himself to go to that lady for it; which, at this critical conjuncture, while he is attending my commands, is impossible.

He conjures me, in the most solemn manner, if I would not throw him into utter despair, to keep to my appointment.

However, instead of threatening my relations, or Solmes, if I recede, he respectfully says, that he doubts not, but that, if I *do*, it will be upon such reasons, as he ought to be satisfied with; upon no slighter, he hopes, than their leaving me at full liberty to pursue my own inclinations: in which (whatever they shall be) he will entirely

* It may not be amiss to observe in this place, that Mr. Lovelace artfully contrived to drive the family on, by permitting *his* and *their* agent Leman to report machinations, which he had neither intention nor power to execute.

† See the Note on Page 158 of this Volume.

tirely acquiesce; only endeavouring *to make his future good behaviour the sole ground for his expectation of my favour.*

In short, he solemnly vows, that his *whole* view at present, is to free me from my imprisonment; and to restore me to my own free-will, in a point so absolutely necessary to my future happiness. He declares, that neither the hopes he has of my future favour, nor the consideration of his own and family's honour, will permit him to propose any-thing *that shall be inconsistent with my own most scrupulous notions:* and, for my mind's sake, should chuse to have the proposed end obtained by my friends declining to compel me. But that nevertheless, as to the world's opinion, it is impossible to imagine, that the behaviour of my relations to me has not already brought upon my family those free censures which they deserve, and caused the step which I am so scrupulous about taking, to be no other than the *natural* and *expected* consequence of their treatment of me.

Indeed, I am afraid all this is true: and it is owing to some little degree of politeness, that Mr. Lovelace does not say all he might say on this subject: for I have no doubt that I am the talk, and perhaps the bye-word of half the county. If so, I am afraid I can now do nothing that will give me more disgrace than I have already so causelessly received by their indiscreet persecutions: and let me be whose I will, and do what I will, I shall never wipe off the stain which my confinement, and the rigorous usage I have received, have fixed upon me; at least in my own opinion.

I wish, if ever I am to be considered as one of the eminent family this man is allied to, some of them do not think the worse of me, for the disgrace I have received. In that case, perhaps, I shall be obliged to him, if *he* do not. You see how much this harsh, this cruel treatment from my own family has humbled me! But perhaps I was too much exalted before.

Mr. Lovelace concludes, with repeatedly begging an interview with me; and that, *this* night, if possible: an honour, he says, he is the more encouraged to solicit for, as I had twice before made him hope for it. But whether he obtain it or not, he beseeches me to chuse one of the alternatives he offers to my acceptance; and not to depart from my resolution of escaping on Monday, unless the reason ceases on which I had taken it up; and that I have a prospect of being restored to the favour of my friends; at least to my own liberty, and freedom of choice.

He renews all his vows and promises on this head in so earnest and so solemn a manner, that (his own *interest*, and his family's *honour*, and their *favour* for me, co-operating) I can have no room to doubt of his sincerity.

LETTER XLI.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

SAT. MORN. 8 O'CLOCK (APRIL 8.)

WHETHER you will blame me or not, I cannot tell, but I have deposited a letter confirming my resolution to leave this house on Monday next, within the hour mentioned in my former, if possible. I have not kept a copy of it. But this is the substance.

I tell him, That I have no way to avoid the determined resolution of my friends in behalf of Mr. Solmes, but by abandoning this house by his assistance.

I have not pretended to make a merit with him on this score; for I plainly tell him, That could I, *without an unpardonable sin*, die when I *would*, I would sooner make death my choice, than take a step, which all the world, if not my own heart, would condemn me for taking.

I tell him, That I shall not try to bring any other cloaths with me, than those I shall have on; and those but my common wearing-apparel; lest I should be suspected. That I must expect to be denied the possession of my estate: but that I am determined never to consent to a litigation with my father, were I to be reduced to ever so low a state. So that the protection I am to be obliged for to any one, must be alone for the distress sake. That, therefore, he will have nothing to hope for from this step, *that he had not before*: and that, in every light I reserve to myself to *accept or refuse his address, as his behaviour and circumspection shall appear to me to deserve.*

I tell

I tell him, That I think it beſt to go into a private lodging, in the neighbourhood of Lady Betty Lawrance; and not to her ladyſhip's houſe; that it may not appear to the world, *that I have refuged myſelf in his family*; and that a reconciliation with my friends may not, on that account, be made impracticable: that I will ſend for thither my faithful Hannah; and apprize only Miſs Howe where I am. That *he ſhall inſtantly leave me*, and go to London, or to one of Lord M.'s ſeats; and (as he had promiſed) not come near me, but by my leave; contenting himſelf with a correſpondence by letter only.

That if I find myſelf in danger of being diſcovered, and carried back by violence, I will then throw myſelf directly into the protection either of Lady Betty or Lady Sarah: but *this only in caſe of abſolute neceſſity*; for that it will be more to my reputation, for me, by the beſt means I can, (taking advantage of my privacy) to enter by a ſecond or third hand *into a treaty of reconciliation with my friends*.

That I muſt, however, plainly tell him, that if in this treaty, my friends *inſiſt upon my reſolving againſt marrying him, I will engage to comply with them*; provided they will allow me to promiſe him, *that I will never be the wife of any other man while he remains ſingle, or is living*; that this is a compliment I am willing to pay him, in return for the trouble and pains he has taken, and the uſage he has met with, on my account. Although I intimate, that he may, in a great meaſure thank himſelf (by reaſon of the little regard he has paid to his reputation) for the ſlights he has met with.

I tell him, That I may, in this privacy, write to my couſin Morden, and, if poſſible, intereſt him in my cauſe.

I take ſome brief notice then of his alternatives.

You muſt think, my dear, that this unhappy force upon me, and this projected flight, make it neceſſary for me to account to him much ſooner than I ſhould otherwiſe chuſe to do, for every part of my conduct.

It is not to be expected, I tell him, that your mother will embroil herſelf, or ſuffer you or Mr. Hickman to be embroiled, on my account: and as to his propoſal of my going to London, I am ſuch an abſolute ſtranger to everybody there, and have ſuch a bad opinion of the place, that I cannot by any means think of going thither; except I ſhould be induced, ſome time hence, by the ladies of his family to attend them.

As to the meeting he is deſirous of, I think it by no means proper; eſpecially as it is ſo likely that I may ſoon ſee him. But that if any thing occurs to induce me to change my mind, as to withdrawing, I will *then take the firſt opportunity to ſee him, and give him my reaſons for that change*.

This, my dear, I the leſs ſcrupled to write, as it might qualify him to bear ſuch a diſappointment, ſhould I give it him; he having, beſides, behaved ſo very unexceptionably when he ſurprized me ſome time ago in the lonely Wood Houſe.

Finally, I commend myſelf, as a perſon in diſtreſs, and *merely as ſuch*, to *his* honour, and to the protection of the ladies of his family. I repeat [moſt cordially, I am ſure!] my deep concern for being forced to take a ſtep ſo diſagreeable, and ſo derogatory to my honour. And having told him, that I will endeavour to obtain leave to dine in the Ivy Summer Houſe*, and to ſend Betty of ſome errand, when there, I leave the reſt to him; but imagine, that about four o'clock will be a proper time for him to contrive ſome ſignal to let me know he is at hand, and for me to unbolt the garden-door.

I added, by way of poſtſcript, That their ſuſpicions ſeeming to encreaſe, I

* The *Ivy Summer Houſe* (or *Ivy Bower*, as it was ſometimes called in the family) was a place, that from a girl, this young lady delighted in. She uſed in the ſummer-months, frequently to ſit and work, and read, and write, and draw, and (when permitted) to breakfaſt, and dine, and ſometimes to ſup, in it; eſpecially when Miſs Howe, who had an equal liking to it, was her viſitor and gueſt.

She deſcribes it, in another letter (which appears not) as pointing to a pretty variegated landſcape of wood, water, and hilly country; which had pleaſed her ſo much, that ſhe had drawn it; the piece hanging up, in her parlour, among ſome of her other drawings.

adviſe

adviſe him to contrive to ſend or come to the uſual place, as frequently as poſſible, in the interval of time till Monday morning ten or eleven o'clock; as ſomething may poſſibly happen to make me alter my mind.

O my dear Miſs Howe!—what a ſad, ſad thing is the neceſſity, forced upon me, for all this preparation and contrivance!—But it is now too late!—But how!—*Too late*, did I ſay?—What a word is *that!*—what a dreadful thing, *were* I to repent, to *find* it to be too late to remedy the apprehended evil!

SATURDAY, TEN O'CLOCK.

MR. SOLMES is here. He is to dine with his new relations, as Betty tells me he already calls them.

He would have thrown himſelf in my way once more: but I hurried up to my priſon, in my return from my garden walk, to avoid him.

I had, when in the garden, the curioſity to ſee if my letter were gone: I cannot ſay with an intention to take it back again if it were not, becauſe I ſee not how I could do otherwiſe than I have done; yet, what a caprice! when I found it gone, I began (as yeſterday morning) to wiſh it had not. For no other reaſon, I believe, than becauſe it was out of my power.

A ſtrange diligence in this man!—He *ſays*, he almoſt lives upon the place; and I think ſo too.

He mentions, as you will ſee in his letter, four ſeveral diſguiſes, which he puts on in one day. It is a wonder, nevertheleſs, that he has not been ſeen by ſome of our tenants: for it is impoſſible that any diſguiſe can hide the gracefulneſs of his figure. But this is to be ſaid, that the adjoining grounds being all in our own hands, and no common foot-paths near that part of the garden, and through the park and coppice, nothing can be more bye and unfrequented.

Then they are leſs watchful, I believe, over my garden-walks, and my poultry-viſits, depending, as my aunt hinted, upon the bad character they have taken ſo much pains to faſten upon Mr. Lovelace. This, they think, (and *juſtly* think) muſt fill me with doubts. And then the regard I have hitherto had for my reputation, is another of their ſecurities. Were it not for theſe two, they would not ſurely have uſed me as they have done; and at the ſame time left me the opportunities which I have ſeveral times had, to get away, had I been diſpoſed to do ſo*: and indeed their dependence on both theſe motives would have been well founded, had they kept but tolerable meaſures with me.

Then, perhaps, they have no notion of the back-door; as it is ſeldom opened, and leads to a place ſo pathleſs and loneſome†. If not, there *can* be no other way to eſcape (if one would) unleſs by the plaſhy lane, ſo full of ſprings, by which your ſervant reaches the ſolitary Wood Houſe; to which lane one muſt deſcend from a high bank, that bounds the poultry-yard. For, as to the front-way, you know, one muſt paſs through the houſe to that, and in ſight of the parlours, and the ſervants hall; and then have the open court-yard to go through, and, by means of the iron-gate, be full in view, as one paſſes over the lawn, for a quarter of a mile together; the young plantations of elms and limes affording yet but little ſhade or covert.

The Ivy Summer Houſe is the moſt convenient for this heart-affecting purpoſe, of any ſpot in the garden, as it is not far from the back-door, and yet

* They might, no doubt, make a dependence upon the reaſons ſhe gives: but their chief reliance was upon the vigilance of their Joſeph Leman; little imagining, what an implement he was of Mr. Lovelace.

† This, in another of her letters, (which neither is inſerted) is thus deſcribed.—'A 'piece of ruins upon it, the remains of an old chapel, now ſtanding in the midſt of the 'coppice; here and there an overgrown oak, ſurrounded with ivy and miſletoe, ſtarting up, 'to ſanctify, as it were, the awful ſolemneſs of the place: a ſpot, too, where a man hav-'ing been found hanging ſome years ago, it was uſed to be thought of by us when children, 'and by the maid-ſervants, with a degree of terror, (it being actually the habitations 'of owls, ravens, and other ominous birds) as haunted by ghoſts, goblins, ſpectres. The 'genuine reſult of country lonelineſs and ignorance: notions which, early propagated, are 'apt to leave impreſſions even upon minds grown ſtrong enough at the ſame time to deſpiſe 'the like credulous follies in others.'

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in another alley, as you may remember. Then it is ſeldom reſorted to by any-body elſe, except in the ſummer-months, becauſe it is cool. When they loved me, they would often, for this reaſon, object to my long continuance in it:—but now, it is no matter what becomes of me. Beſides, *cold is a bracer*, as my brother ſaid yeſterday.

Here I will depoſit what I have written. Let me have your prayers, my dear; and your approbation, or your cenſure, of the ſteps I have taken: for yet it may not be quite too late to revoke the appointment. I am *your moſt affectionate and faithful*

CL. HARLOWE.

Why will you ſend your ſervant empty-handed?

LETTER XLII.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

SAT. AFTERNOON.

BY your laſt date of ten o'clock in your letter of this day, you could not long have depoſited it before Robin took it. He rode hard, and brought it to me juſt as I had riſen from table.

You may juſtly blame me for ſending my meſſenger empty-handed, your ſituation conſidered; and yet that very ſituation (ſo critical!) is partly the reaſon for it: for indeed I know not what to write, fit to ſend you.

I have been enquiring privately, how to procure you a conveyance from Harlowe Place, and yet not appear in it; knowing, that to oblige in the *fact*, and to diſoblige in the *manner*, is but obliging by halves: my mother being moreover very ſuſpicious, and very uneaſy; made more ſo by daily viſits from your uncle Antony; who tells her, that every-thing is now upon the point of being determined; and hopes, that her daughter will not ſo interfere, as to diſcourage your compliance with their wills. This I came at by a way that I cannot take notice of, or *both* ſhould hear of it in a manner *neither* would like: and, *without* that, my mother and I have had almoſt hourly bickerings.

I found more difficulty than I expected (as the time was confined, and ſecreſy required, and as you ſo earneſtly forbid me to accompany you in your enterprize) in procuring you a vehicle. Had you not obliged me to keep meaſures with my mother, I could have managed it with eaſe. I could even have taken our own chariot, on one pretence or other, and put two horſes extraordinary to it, if I had thought fit; and I could, when we had got to London, have ſent it back, and nobody the wiſer as to the lodgings we might have taken.

I wiſh to the Lord, you had permitted this. Indeed I think you are too punctilious a great deal for your ſituation. Would you expect to enjoy yourſelf with your uſual placidneſs, and not be ruffled, in an hurricane which every moment threatens to blow your houſe down?

Had your diſtreſs ſprung from yourſelf, that would have been another thing. But when all the world knows where to lay the fault, this alters the caſe.

How can you ſay I am happy, when my mother, to her power, is as much an abettor of their wickedneſs to my deareſt friend, as your aunt, or any-body elſe?—And this through the inſtigation of that odd-headed and fooliſh uncle of yours, who [ſorry creature that he is!] keeps her up to reſolutions which are unworthy of her, for an example to me, if it pleaſe you. Is not this cauſe enough for me to ground a reſentment upon, ſufficient to juſtify me for accompanying you; the friendſhip between us ſo well known?

Indeed, my dear, the importance of the caſe conſidered, I muſt repeat, that you are too nice. Don't they already think, that your non-compliance with their odious meaſures is owing a good deal to my advice? Have they not prohibited our correſpondence upon that very ſurmiſe? And have I, but on *your* account, reaſon to value *what* they think?

Beſides, what diſcredit have I to fear by ſuch a ſtep? What detriment? Would Hickman, do you believe, refuſe me upon it?—If he did, ſhould I be ſorry for that?—Who is it, that has a ſoul, who would not be affected by ſuch an inſtance of female friendſhip?

But I ſhould vex and diſorder my

mother!—Well, that is something: but not more than she vexes and disorders me, on her being made an implement by such a sorry creature, who ambles hither every day in spite to my dearest friend—Woe be to *both*, if it be for a *double end!*—Chide me, if you will: I don't care.

I say, and I insist upon it, such a step would *ennoble* your friend: and if still you will permit it, I will take the office out of Lovelace's hands; and, to-morrow evening, or on Monday before his time of appointment takes place, will come in a chariot, or chaise. And then, my dear, if we get off as I wish, will we make terms (and what terms we please) with them all. My mother will be glad to receive her daughter again I warrant: and Hickman will cry for *joy* on my return; or he shall for *sorrow*.

But you are so very earnestly angry with me for proposing such a step, and have always so much to say for your side of *any* question, that I am afraid to urge it farther.—Only be so good (let me add) as to encourage me to resume it, if, upon farther consideration, and upon weighing matters well, (and in *this* light, whether best to go off with *me*, or with *Lovelace*) you can get over your punctilious regard for my reputation. A woman going away with a *woman* is not so discreditable a thing, surely! and with no view, but to *avoid the fellows!*—I say, only be so good as to *consider* this point; and if you *can* get over your scruples on *my* account, do. And so I will have done with this argument for the present; and apply myself to some of the passages in yours.

A time, I hope, will come, that I shall be able to read your affecting narratives without that impatient bitterness, which now boils over in my heart, and would flow to my pen, were I to enter into the particulars of what you write. And indeed I am afraid of giving you my advice at all, or of telling you what I should do in your case; (supposing you will still refuse my offer; finding too, what you have been brought or rather driven to, without it) lest any evil should follow it: in which case, I should never forgive myself. And this consideration has added to my difficulties in writing to you now you are upon such a crisis, and yet refuse the *only* method—But I said, I would not for the present touch any more that string. Yet, one word more, chide me if you please: if any harm betide you, I shall for ever blame my mother—Indeed I shall—And perhaps yourself, if you do not accept of my offer.

But one thing, in your present situation and prospects, let me advise: it is this, that if you *do* go off with Mr. Lovelace, you take the first opportunity to marry. Why should you *not*, when every-body will know by *whose* assistance, and in *whose* company, you leave your father's house, go whithersoever you will?—You may indeed keep him at a distance, until settlements are drawn, and such like matters are adjusted to your mind: but even these are matters of less consideration in your particular case, than they would be in that of most others: and first, *Because*, he his other faults what they will, nobody thinks him an ungenerous man: next, *Because* the possession of your estate must be given up to you as soon as your cousin Morden comes; who, as your trustee, will see it done; and done upon proper terms: 3dly, *Because* there is no want of fortune on his side: 4thly, *Because* all his family value you, and are extremely desirous that you should be their relation: 5thly, *Because* he makes no scruple of accepting you without conditions. You see how he has always defied your relations; [I, for my own part, can forgive him for the fault: nor know I, if it be not a noble one] and I dare say, he had rather call you *his*, without a shilling, than be under obligation to those whom he has full as little reason to love, as they have to love him. You have heard, that his own relations cannot make his proud spirit submit to owe any favour to them.

For all these reasons, I think, you may the less stand upon previous settlements. It is therefore my absolute opinion, that if you *do* withdraw with him, (and in that case you must let *him* be judge, when he can leave you with safety, *you'll observe that*) you should not postpone the ceremony.

Give this matter your most serious consideration. Punctilio is out of doors the moment you are out of your father's house. I know how justly severe you have been upon those inexcusable creatures whose giddiness, and even want

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of decency, have made them, in the *ſame hour* as I may ſay, leap from a parent's window to a huſband's bed—But conſidering Lovelace's character, I repeat my opinion, that your *reputation* in the eye of the world requires that no delay be made in *this* point when once you are in his power.

I need not, I am ſure, make a ſtronger plea to *you*.

You ſay, in excuſe for my mother, (what my fervent love for my friend very ill brooks) That we ought not to blame any one for not doing what ſhe has an option to do, or to let alone. This, in caſes of friendſhip, would admit of very ſtrict diſcuſſion. If the thing requeſted be of *greater* conſequence, or even of *equal*, to the perſon ſought to, and it were, as the old phraſe has it, *to take a thorn out of one's friend's foot, to put it into one's own*, ſomething might be ſaid.—Nay, it would be, I will venture to ſay, a ſelfiſh thing in us to aſk a favour of a friend which would ſubject that friend to the *ſame* or *equal* inconvenience as that from which we wanted to be relieved. The requeſter would, in this caſe, teach his friend, by his *own* ſelfiſh example, with much *better* reaſon, to deny him, and deſpiſe a friendſhip ſo *merely* nominal. But if by a *leſs* inconvenience to ourſelves, we could relieve our friend from a *greater*, the refuſal of ſuch a favour makes the refuſer unworthy of the name of friend: nor would I admit ſuch a one, not even into the *outermoſt* fold of my heart.

I am well aware that this is your opinion of friendſhip, as well as mine: for I owe the diſtinction to you, upon a certain occaſion; and it ſaved me from a very great inconvenience, as you muſt needs remember. But you were always for making excuſes for *other* people, in caſes wherein you would not have allowed of one for *yourſelf*.

I muſt own, that were theſe excuſes for a friend's indifference, or denial, made by any-body but *you*, in a caſe of ſuch *vaſt* importance to herſelf, and of ſo comparative a *ſmall* one to thoſe for whoſe protection ſhe would be thought to wiſh; I, who am for ever, as you have often remarked, endeavouring to trace effects to their cauſes, ſhould be ready to ſuſpect, that there was a latent, unowned inclination, which balancing, or *preponderating* rather, made the iſſue of the alternative (however important) ſit more lightly upon the excuſer's mind than ſhe cared to own.

You will underſtand me, my dear. But if you do not, it may be as well for me; for I am afraid I ſhall *have it* from you, for but ſtarting ſuch a notion, or giving a hint, which perhaps, as you did once in another caſe, you will reprimandingly call, not being able to forego the oſtentation of ſagacity, though at the expence of that tenderneſs which is due to friendſhip and charity.

What ſignifies owning a fault without mending it, you'll ſay?—Very true, my dear. But you know I ever was a ſaucy creature—Ever ſtood in need of great allowances.—And I remember likewiſe that I ever had them from my dear Clariſſa. Nor do I doubt them now: for you know how much I love you—If it be poſſible, *more* than *myſelf* I love you! Believe me, my dear: and, in conſequence of that belief, you will be able to judge, how much I am affected by your preſent diſtreſsful and critical ſituation; which will not ſuffer me to paſs by without a cenſure even that *philoſophy* of temper in your own cauſe, which you have not in another's, and which all that know you ever admired you for.

From this critical and diſtreſsful ſituation, it ſhall be my hourly prayer, that you may be delivered without blemiſh to that fair fame, which has hitherto, like your heart, been unſpotted.

With this prayer, twenty times repeated, concludes *your ever-affectionate*

ANNA HOWE.

I hurried myſelf in writing this; and I hurry Robin away with it, that in a ſituation ſo very critical, you may have all the time poſſible to conſider what I have written, upon two points ſo very important. I will repeat them in a very few words:

Whether you chuſe not rather to go off with one of *your own ſex*; with your ANNA HOWE—than with one of the *other*; with Mr. LOVELACE?

And if *not*,

Whether you ſhould not marry him as ſoon as poſſible?

LETTER XLIII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

[THE PRECEDING LETTER NOT RECEIVED.]

SATURDAY, AFTERNOON.

ALREADY have I an ecſtatick anſwer, as I may call it, to my letter.

He promiſes compliance with my will in every article: approves of all I propoſe; particularly of the private lodging: and thinks it a happy expedient to obviate the cenſures of the buſy and the unreflecting: and yet he hopes, that the putting myſelf into the protection of either of his aunts (treated as I am treated) would be far from being looked upon by any-body in a diſreputable light. But every thing I enjoin or reſolve upon muſt, he ſays, be right, not only with reſpect to my preſent but future reputation; with regard to which, he hopes ſo to behave himſelf, as to be *allowed* to be, next to myſelf, more *properly* ſolicitous than any-body. He will only aſſure me, that his whole family are extremely deſirous to take advantage of the perſecutions I labour under, to make their court and endear themſelves to me, by their beſt and moſt chearful ſervices: happy, if they can in any meaſure contribute to my preſent freedom and future happineſs.

He will this afternoon, he ſays, write to Lord M. and to Lady Betty and Lady Sarah, that he is now within view of being the happieſt man in the world, if it be not his own fault; ſince the only woman upon earth that can make him ſo, will be ſoon out of danger of being another man's; and cannot poſſibly preſcribe any terms to him that he ſhall not think it his duty to comply with.

He flatters himſelf now, (my laſt letter *confirming* my reſolution) that he can be in no apprehenſion of my changing my mind, unleſs my friends change their manner of acting by me; which he is too ſure they will not*. And now will all his relations, who take ſuch a kind and generous ſhare in his intereſts, glory and pride themſelves in the proſpects he has before him.

Thus artfully does he hold me to it.

As to fortune, he begs of me not to be ſolicitous on that ſcore: that his own eſtate is ſufficient for us both; not a *nominal*, but a *real*, two thouſand pounds *per annum*, equivalent to ſome eſtates reputed a third more: that it never was encumbred: that he is clear of the world, both as to book and bond debts; thanks, perhaps, to his *pride*, more than to his *virtue*: that Lord M. moreover reſolves to ſettle upon him a thouſand pounds *per annum* on his nuptials. And to this, he will have it, his lordſhip is inſtigated more by motives of *juſtice*, than of *generoſity*; as he muſt conſider it was but an equivalent for an eſtate which he had got poſſeſſion of, to which *his* (Mr. Lovelace's) mother had better pretenſions. That his lordſhip alſo propoſed to give him up either his ſeat in Hertfordſhire, or that in Lancaſhire, at his own or at his wife's option, eſpecially if I am the perſon. All which it will be in my power to ſee done, and proper ſettlements drawn, *before* I enter into any farther engagements with him; if I will have it ſo.

He ſays, That I need not be under any ſolicitude as to *apparel*: all *immediate* occaſions of that ſort will be moſt chearfully ſupplied by the ladies of his family: as my others ſhall, with the greateſt pride and pleaſure (if I will allow him that honour) by himſelf.

He aſſures me, That I ſhall govern him as I pleaſe, with regard to anything in *his* power towards effecting a reconciliation with my friends: a point he knows my heart is ſet upon.

He is afraid, that the time will hardly allow of his procuring Miſs Charlotte Montague's attendance upon me, at St. Alban's, as he had propoſed ſhe ſhould; becauſe, he underſtands, ſhe keeps her chamber with a violent cold and ſore throat. But both ſhe and her ſiſter, the firſt moment ſhe is able to go abroad, ſhall viſit me at my private lodgings; and introduce me to Lady Sarah and Lady Betty, or thoſe ladies

* Well he might be ſo ſure, when he had the art to play them off, by his corrupted agent, and to make them all join to promote his views unknown to themſelves; as is ſhewn in ſome of his preceding letters.

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to me, as I ſhall chuſe; and accompany me to town, if I pleaſe; and ſtay as long in it with me, as I ſhall think fit to ſtay there.

Lord M. will alſo, at my own time, and in my own *manner*, (that is to ſay, either publickly or privately) make me a viſit. And, for his own part, when he has ſeen me in ſafety, either in their protection, or in the privacy I prefer, he will leave me, and not attempt to viſit me but by my own permiſſion.

Hé had thoughts once, he ſays, on hearing of his couſin Charlotte's indiſpoſition, to have engaged his couſin Patty's attendance upon me, either in or about the neighbouring village, or at St. Alban's: but, he ſays, ſhe is a low-ſpirited, timorous girl, and would but the more have perplexed us.

So, my dear, the enterprize requires courage and high ſpirits, you ſee!—And indeed it does!—What am I about to do!

He himſelf, it is plain, thinks it neceſſary that I ſhould be accompanied with one of my own ſex.—He might, at leaſt, have propoſed the woman of one of the ladies of his family.—Lord bleſs me!—What am I about to do!

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After all, far as I have gone, I know not but I may ſtill recede: and if I do, a mortal quarrel I ſuppoſe will enſue.—And what if it does?—Could there be any way to eſcape this Solmes, a breach with Lovelace might make way for the ſingle life to take place, which I ſo much prefer: and then I would defy the ſex. For I ſee nothing but trouble and vexation that they bring upon ours: and when once entered, one is obliged to go on with them, treading, with tender feet, upon thorns, and ſharper thorns, to the end of a painful journey.

What to do I know not. The more I think, the more I am embarraſſed!—And the ſtronger will be my doubts as the appointed time draws near.

But I will go down, and take a little turn in the garden; and depoſit this, and his letters all but the two laſt, which I will incloſe in my next, if I have opportunity to write another.

Mean time, my dear friend——But what can I deſire you to pray for?—Adieu then!—Let me only ſay—Adieu!

LETTER XLIV.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

[IN ANSWER TO LETTER XLII.]

SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 9.

DO not think, my beloved friend, although you have given me in yours of yeſterday a *ſeverer* inſtance of what, nevertheleſs, I muſt call your *impartial* love, than ever yet I received from you, that I will be diſpleaſed with you for it. That would be to put myſelf into the inconvenient ſituation of royalty: that is to ſay, *out of the way* of ever being told of my faults; of ever mending them; and *in the way* of making the ſincereſt and warmeſt friendſhip uſeleſs to me.

And then how brightly, how nobly glows in your boſom the ſacred flame of friendſhip; ſince it can make you ready to impute to the unhappy ſufferer a *leſs degree* of warmth in *her own* cauſe, than *you* have for her, becauſe ſhe endeavours to diveſt herſelf of *ſelf* ſo far as to leave others to the option which they have a right to make!—Ought I, my dear, to blame, ought I not rather to admire you for this ardour?

But nevertheleſs, leſt you ſhould think that there is any foundation for a ſurmiſe which (although it owes it's riſe to *your* friendſhip) would, if there *were*, leave *me* utterly inexcuſable; I muſt, in juſtice to myſelf, declare, that I know not my own heart, if I have any of that *latent* or *un-owned inclination*, which you would impute to *any other but me*. Nor does the *important alternative ſit lightly on my mind*. And yet I muſt excuſe your mother, were it but on this ſingle conſideration, that I could not preſume to reckon upon *her* favour, as I could upon *her daughter's*, ſo as to make the claim of friendſhip upon *her*, to whom, as the mother of my deareſt friend, a veneration is owing, which can hardly be compatible with that ſweet familiarity which is one of the indiſpenſable requiſites of the ſacred tie by which your heart and mine are bound in one.

What therefore I might expect from my *Anna Howe*, I *ought not* from her *mother*; for would it not be very ſtrange, that a perſon of her experience ſhould be

be reflected upon becauſe ſhe gave not up her own judgment, where the conſequence of her doing ſo would be to embroil herſelf, as ſhe apprehends, with a family ſhe has lived well with, and in behalf of a child againſt her parents?—As ſhe has moreover a daughter of her own:—a daughter too, give me leave to ſay, of whoſe vivacity and charming ſpirits ſhe is more apprehenſive than ſhe need to be, becauſe her truly maternal cares make her fear more from her *youth*, than ſhe hopes from her *prudence*; which nevertheleſs ſhe and all the world know to be *beyond* her years.

And here let me add, that whatever you may generouſly, and as the reſult of an ardent affection for your unhappy friend, urge on this head, in my behalf, or harſhly againſt any one who may refuſe me protection in the extraordinary circumſtances I find myſelf in; I have ſome pleaſure, in being able to curb undue expectations upon my indulgent friends, whatever were to befal myſelf from thoſe circumſtances; for I ſhould be extremely mortified, were I by my ſelfiſh forwardneſs to give occaſion for ſuch a check, as to be told, that I had encouraged an unreaſonable hope; or, according to the phraſe you mention, wiſhed to take *a thorn out of my own foot, and to put it into that of my friend.* Nor ſhould I be better pleaſed with myſelf, if, having been taught by my good Mrs. Norton, that the beſt of ſchools is *that of affliction*, I ſhould rather learn impatience than the contrary, by the leſſons I am obliged to get by heart in it; and if I ſhould judge of the *merits of others*, as they were *kind to me*; and that at the expence of their own convenience or peace of mind. For is not this to ſuppoſe myſelf ever in the right; and all who do not act as I would have them act, perpetually in the wrong? In ſhort, to make *my* ſake, *God's* ſake, in the ſenſe of Mr. Solmes's pitiful plea to me?

How often, my dear, have you and I endeavoured to detect and cenſure this partial ſpirit in others?

But I know you do not always content yourſelf with ſaying what you think may *juſtly* be ſaid; but, in order to ſhew the extent of a penetration which can go to the bottom of any ſubject, delight to ſay or to write all that *can* be *ſaid* or *written*, or even *thought*, on the particular occaſion; and this partly perhaps from being deſirous [pardon me, my dear!] to be thought miſtreſs of a ſagacity that is aforehand with events. But who would wiſh to drain off or dry up a refreſhing current, becauſe it now-and-then puts us to ſome little inconvenience by it's overflowings? In other words, who would not allow for the livelineſs of a ſpirit which for one painful ſenſibility gives an hundred pleaſurable ones? And the *one* in conſequence of the *other?*

But now I come to the two points in your letter, which moſt ſenſibly concern me: thus you put them—

> Whether I chuſe not rather to go off [ſhocking words!] with one of my *own ſex*; with my ANNA HOWE —than with one of the *other*; with Mr. LOVELACE?
>
> And if *not*,
>
> Whether I ſhould not marry him as ſoon as poſſible?

You know, my dear, my reaſons for rejecting your propoſal, and even for being earneſt that you ſhould not be *known* to be aſſiſting to me in an enterprize in which a cruel neceſſity induced *me* to think of engaging; and for which *you* have not the ſame plea. At this rate, *well* might your mother be uneaſy at our correſpondence, not knowing to what inconveniences it might ſubject her and you!—If *I* am hardly excuſable to think of withdrawing from my *unkind* friends, what could *you* have to ſay for yourſelf, were you to abandon a mother ſo *indulgent?* Does ſhe ſuſpect that your fervent friendſhip may lead you to a *ſmall* indiſcretion? And does this ſuſpicion offend you? And would you, in reſentment, ſhew her and the world, that you can voluntarily ruſh into the *higheſt error* that any of our ſex can be guilty of?

And is it worthy of your generoſity [I aſk you, my dear, is it?] to think of taking ſo undutiful a ſtep, becauſe you believe your mother would be glad to receive you again?

I do aſſure you, that were I to take this ſtep myſelf, I would run all riſques rather than you ſhould accompany me in it. Have I, do you think, a deſire to *double* and *treble* my own fault in the eye of the world? In the eye of that world,

world, which, cruelly as I am uſed, (not knowing all) would not acquit *me*?

But, my deareſt, kindeſt friend, let me tell you, that we will *neither* of us take ſuch a ſtep. The manner of putting your queſtions abundantly convinces me, that I ought not, in *your* opinion, to *attempt* it. You no doubt *intend* that I ſhall *ſo* take it; and I thank you for the equally polite and forcible conviction.

It is ſome ſatisfaction to me, (taking the matter in this light) that I had begun to waver before I received your laſt. And now I tell you, that it has abſolutely determined me *not* to go off; at leaſt, not to-morrow.

If *you*, my dear, think the *iſſue of the alternative* (to uſe your own words) *fits ſo lightly upon my mind*; in ſhort, that my *inclination* is *faulty*; the *world* would treat me much leſs ſcrupulouſly. When, therefore, you repreſent, *that all punctilio muſt be at an end the moment I am out of my father's houſe*; *and hint*, that I muſt ſubmit it to Mr. Lovelace to judge *when* he can leave me with ſafety; that is to ſay, give *him* the option whether he will leave me, or not; who can bear theſe reflections, who can reſolve to incur theſe inconveniences, that has the queſtion ſtill in her own power to decide upon?

While I thought only of an eſcape from *this houſe* as an eſcape from Mr. *Solmes*; that already my reputation ſuffered by my confinement; and that it would be ſtill in my own option, either to marry Mr. Lovelace, or wholly to renounce him; bold as the ſtep was, I thought, treated as I am treated, ſomething was to be ſaid in excuſe of it—If not to the world, to *myſelf*: and to be *ſelf-acquitted*, is a bleſſing to be preferred to the opinion of all the world. But, after I have cenſured moſt ſeverely, as I have ever done, thoſe giddy girls, who have in the ſame hour, as I may ſay, that they have fled from their chamber, preſented themſelves at the altar that is to witneſs to their undutiful raſhneſs; after I have ſtipulated with Mr. Lovelace *for time*, and for *an ultimate option whether to accept or refuſe him*; and for his *leaving me, as ſoon as I am in a place of ſafety*, (which, as you obſerve, *he* muſt be the judge of;) and after he has *ſignified to me his compliance with theſe terms*; ſo that I cannot, if I *would*, recal them, and ſuddenly marry—You ſee, my dear, that I have nothing left me, but to reſolve *not* to go away with him.

But, how, on this revocation of my appointment, ſhall I be able to pacify him?

How!—Why aſſert the privilege of my ſex!—Surely, on *this* ſide of the ſolemnity he has no *right* to be diſpleaſed. Beſides, did I not reſerve a power of receding, as I ſaw fit? To what purpoſe, as I aſked in the caſe between your mother and you, has any-body an option, if the making uſe of it ſhall give the refuſed a right to be diſguſted?

Far, very far, would *thoſe*, who, according to the old law, have a *right* of *abſolving* or *confirming* a child's promiſe, be from ratifying *mine*, had it been ever *ſo ſolemn* a one*. But this

* See *Numb.* xxx. Where it is declared, whoſe vows ſhall be binding, and whoſe not. The vows of a man, or of a widow, are there pronounced to be indiſpenſable; becauſe they are ſole, and ſubject to no other domeſtick authority. But the vows of a ſingle woman, and of a wife, if the father of the one, or the huſband of the other, diſallow of them as ſoon as they know them, are to be of no force.

A matter highly neceſſary to be known; by all young ladies eſpecially, whoſe deſigning addreſſers too often endeavour to engage them by vows; and then plead conſcience and honour to them to hold them down to the performance.

It cannot be amiſs to recite the very words.

Ver. 3. *If a woman vow a vow unto the Lord, and bind herſelf by a bond, being in her father's houſe in her youth*;

4. *And her father hear her vow, and her bond wherewith ſhe hath bound her ſoul, and her father ſhall hold his peace at her; then all her vows ſhall ſtand, and every bond wherewith ſhe hath bound her ſoul ſhall ſtand.*

5. *But if her father diſallow her in the day that he heareth; not any of her vows or of her bonds wherewith ſhe hath bound her ſoul ſhall ſtand: and the Lord ſhall forgive her, becauſe her father diſallowed her.*

The ſame in the caſe of a wife, as ſaid above. See Ver. 6, 7, 8, &c.—And all is thus ſolemnly cloſed:

Ver. 16. *Theſe are the ſtatutes which the Lord commanded Moſes between a man and his wife, between the father and his daughter, being yet in her youth in her father's houſe.*

was

was rather an *appointment* than a promiſe: and ſuppoſe it had been the latter; and that I had *not* reſerved to myſelf a liberty of revoking it; was it to preclude *better* or *maturer* conſideration?—If ſo, how unfit to be given!—How ungenerous to be inſiſted upon!—And how unfitter ſtill, to be kept!—Is there a man living who ought to be angry that a woman whom he hopes one day to call his, ſhall refuſe to keep a raſh promiſe, when, on the maureſt deliberation, ſhe is convinced that it *was* a raſh one?

I reſolve then, upon the whole, to ſtand this one trial of Wedneſday next—or, perhaps, I ſhould rather ſay, of Tueſday evening, if my father hold his purpoſe of endeavouring, in perſon, to make me *read*, or *hear* read, and then *ſign*, the ſettlements.—*That*, *that* muſt be the greateſt trial of all.

If I am compelled to ſign them overnight—Then (the Lord bleſs me!) muſt all I dread, follow, as of courſe, on Wedneſday. If I can prevail upon them by my prayers [Perhaps I ſhall fall into fits; for the very firſt appearance of my father, after having been ſo long baniſhed his preſence, will greatly affect me—If, I ſay, I can prevail upon them by my prayers] to lay aſide their views, or to ſuſpend the day, if but for one week; if *not*, but for two or three days; ſtill Wedneſday will be a lighter day of trial. They will ſurely give me time to *conſider*; to *argue* with myſelf. This will not be *promiſing*. As I have made no effort to get away, they have no reaſon to ſuſpect me; ſo I may have an opportunity, in the laſt reſort, to withdraw. Mrs. Norton is to be with me: ſhe, although ſhe ſhould be chidden for it, will, in my extremity, plead for me. My aunt Hervey *may*, in ſuch an extremity, join with her. Perhaps my mother may be brought over. I will kneel to each, one by one, to make a friend. Some of them have been afraid to ſee me, leſt they ſhould be moved in my favour: does not this give me a reaſonable hope, that I *may* move them? My brother's counſel, heretofore given, to turn me out of doors to my evil deſtiny, may again be repeated, and may prevail: *then* ſhall I be in no *worſe* caſe than *now*, as to the diſpleaſure of my friends; and thus far *better*, that it will not be my fault that I ſeek another protection: which even *then* ought to be my couſin Morden's, rather than Mr. Lovelace's, or any other perſon's.

My heart, in ſhort, miſgives me leſs, when I reſolve *this* way, than when I think of the *other*: and in ſo ſtrong and involuntary a bias, the *heart* is, as I may ſay, *conſcience*. And well cautions the wiſe man: 'Let the counſel of thine 'own heart ſtand; for there is no man 'more faithful to thee, than it: for a 'man's mind is ſometimes wont to tell 'him more than ſeven watchmen, that 'ſit above in a high tower*.'

Forgive theſe indigeſted ſelf-reaſonings. I will cloſe here: and inſtantly ſet about a letter of revocation to Mr. Lovelace; take it as he will. It will only be another trial of temper to *him*. To *me* of infinite importance. And has he not promiſed temper and acquieſcence, on the ſuppoſition of a change in my mind?

LETTER XLV.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

SUNDAY MORNING, (APRIL 9.)

NOBODY, it ſeems, will go to church this day. No bleſſing to be expected perhaps upon views ſo worldly, and in ſome ſo cruel.

They have a miſtruſt that I have ſome device in my head. Betty has been looking among my cloaths. I found her, on coming up from depoſiting my letter to Lovelace, (for I *have* written!) peering among them; for I had left the key in the lock. She coloured, and was confounded to be caught. But I only ſaid, I ſhould be accuſtomed to any ſort of treatment in time. If ſhe had her orders—thoſe were enough for her.

She owned, in her confuſion, that a motion had been made to abridge me of my airings; and the report *ſhe* ſhould make, would be of no diſadvantage to me. One of my friends, ſhe told me, urged in my behalf, that there was no need of laying me under greater reſtraint, ſince Mr. Lovelace's threatening to *reſcue* me by violence, were I to have been carried to my uncle's, was a con-

* *Eccluſ.* xxxvii. 13, 14.

viction

viction that I had no design to go to him voluntarily; and that if I *had*, I should have made preparations of that kind *before now*; and, most probably, been detected in them.—*Hence*, it was also inferred, that there was no room to doubt, but I would at last comply. 'And,' added the bold creature, 'if 'you don't intend to do so, your con-'duct, Miss, seems strange to me.'—Only thus she reconciled it; that I had gone so far, I knew not how to come off *genteelly*: and she fancied I should, in *full congregation*, on Wednesday, give Mr. Solmes my hand. 'And then,' said the confident wench, 'as the learned Dr. 'Brand took his text last Sunday, *There* '*will be joy in Heaven*.'

This is the substance of my letter to Mr. Lovelace:

That I have reasons of the greatest consequence to *myself*, (and which, when known, must satisfy *him*) to suspend, for the present, my intention of leaving my father's house: that I have hopes that matters may be brought to an happy conclusion, without taking a step, which nothing but the last necessity could justify: and that he may depend upon my promise, that I will die rather than consent to marry Mr. Solmes.

And so, I am preparing myself to stand the shock of his exclamatory reply. But be that what it will, it cannot affect me so much, as the apprehensions of what may happen to me next Tuesday or Wednesday; for now those apprehensions engage my whole attention, and make me sick at the very heart.

SUNDAY, FOUR IN THE AFTERNOON.

MY letter is not yet taken away—If he should not send for it, or take it, and come hither on my not meeting him to-morrow, in doubt of what may have befallen me, what shall I do! Why had I any concerns with this sex!—I, that was so happy till I knew this man!

I dined in the Ivy Summer House. My request to do so was complied with at the first word. To shew I meant nothing, I went again into the house with Betty, as soon as I had dined. I thought it was not amiss to ask this liberty; the weather seemed to be set in fine. Who knows what Tuesday or Wednesday may produce?

SUNDAY EVENING, SEVEN O'CLOCK.

THERE remains my letter still!—He is busied, I suppose, in his preparations for to-morrow. But then he has servants. Does the man think he is so *secure* of me, that having appointed, he need not give himself any further concern about me, till the very moment? He knows how I am beset. He knows not what may happen. I *might* be ill, or still more closely watched or confined than before. The correspondence *might* be discovered. It *might* be necessary to vary the scheme. I *might* be forced into measures, which might entirely frustrate my purpose. I *might* have new doubts. I *might* suggest something more convenient, for any-thing he knew. What can the man mean, I wonder!—Yet it shall lie; for if he has it any time before the appointed hour, it will save me declaring to him personally my changed purpose, and the trouble of contending with him on that score. If he send for it at all, he will see by the date, that he might have had it in time; and if he be put to any inconvenience from shortness of notice, let him take it for his pains.

SUNDAY NIGHT, NINE O'CLOCK.

IT is determined, it seems, to send for Mrs. Norton to be here on Tuesday to dinner; and she is to stay with me for a whole week.

So she is first to endeavour to persuade me to comply; and, when the violence is done, she is to comfort me, and try to reconcile me to my fate. They expect *fits* and *fetches*, Betty insolently tells me, and expostulations, and exclamations, *without number*: but everybody will be prepared for them; and when it's over, it's over; and I shall be easy and pacified when I find I can't help it.

MONDAY MORNING, APRIL 10, SEVEN O'CLOCK.

O MY dear! There yet lies the letter, just as I left it!

Does he think he is so sure of me?—Perhaps he imagines that I *dare not* alter my purpose. I wish I had never known him! I begin now to see this rashness in the light every-one else would have seen it in, had I been guilty of it. But what can I do, if he come to-day at the appointed time! If he receive not the letter, I must see him, or he will think something has befallen me; and certainly will come to the house. As certainly he will be insulted. And what, in that case, may be the

consequence! Then I as good as promised that I would take the first opportunity to see him, if I changed my mind, and to give him my reasons for it. I have no doubt but he will be out of humour upon it: but better, if we meet, that *he* go away dissatisfied with *me*, than that *I* should go away dissatisfied with *myself*.

Yet, short as the time is, he may still perhaps send, and get the letter. Something may have happened to prevent him, which, when known, will excuse him.

After I have disappointed him more than once before, on a requested *interview* only, it is impossible he should not have *curiosity* at least, to know if something has not happened; and whether my mind hold or not in this more *important case*. And yet, as I rashly confirmed my resolution by a second letter, I begin now to doubt it.

NINE O'CLOCK.

My cousin Dolly Hervey slid the inclosed letter into my hand, as I passed by her, coming out of the garden.

'DEAREST MADAM,

'I Have got intelligence from one who 'pretends to know every thing, 'that you must be married on Wednes'day morning to Mr. Solmes. Perhaps, 'however, she says this only to vex me; 'for it is that saucy creature Betty 'Barnes. A licence is got, as she says: 'and so far she went as to tell me, '(bidding me say nothing; but she 'knew I would) that Mr. Brand is to 'marry you. For Dr. Lewen, I hear, 'refuses, unless your consent can be 'obtained; and they have heard that he 'does not approve of their proceedings 'against you. Mr. Brand, I am told, 'is to have his fortune made by uncle 'Harlowe, and among them.

'You will know better than I what 'to make of all these matters; for 'sometimes I think Betty tells me 'things as if I should not tell you, and 'yet expects that I will*. For there 'is great whispering between Miss 'Harlowe and her; and I have ob'served that when their whispering is 'over, Betty comes and tells me some'thing by way of secret. She and all the 'world know how much I love you: 'and so I would *have* them. It is an 'honour to me to love a young lady 'who is and ever was an honour to all 'her family, let them say what they 'will.

'But from a more certain authority 'than Betty's, I can assure you, (but I 'must beg of you to burn this letter) 'that you are to be searched once more 'for letters, and for pen and ink; for 'they know you write. Something 'they pretend to have come at from one 'of Mr. Lovelace's servants, which 'they hope to make something of. I 'know not for certain what it is. He 'must be a very vile and wicked man, 'who would boast of a lady's favour 'to him, and reveal secrets. But Mr. 'Lovelace, I dare say, is too much of 'a gentleman to be guilty of such in'gratitude.

'Then they have a notion, from that 'false Betty I believe, that you intend 'to take something to make yourself 'sick; and so they will search for phials 'and powders, and such-like.

'If nothing should be found that 'will increase their suspicions, you are 'to be used more kindly by your papa 'when you appear before them all, than 'he of late has used you.

'Yet, sick or well, alas! my dear 'cousin! you must be married. But 'your husband is to go home every 'night without you, till you are re'conciled to him. And so illness can 'be no pretence to save you.

'They are sure you will make a good 'wife. So would not I, unless I liked 'my husband. And Mr. Solmes is al'ways telling them how he will pur'chase your love by rich presents.—A 'sycophant man!—I wish he and Betty 'Barnes were to come together; and 'he would beat her every day.

'After what I have told you, I need 'not advise you to secure every-thing 'you would not have seen.

'Once more let me beg that you 'will burn this letter: and, pray, dear'est Madam, do not take any-thing 'that may prejudice your health; for

* It is easy for such of the readers as have been attentive to Mr. Lovelace's manner of working, to suppose, from this hint of Miss Hervey's, that he had instructed his double-faced agent to put his sweetheart Betty upon alarming Miss Hervey, in hopes she would alarm her beloved cousin, (as we see she does) in order to keep her steady to her appointment with him.

'that

'that will not do. I am *your truly-loving cousin*,

'D. H.'

When I first read my cousin's letter, I was half inclined to resume my former intention; especially as my countermanding letter was not taken away; and as my heart ached at the thoughts of the conflict I must expect to have with him on my refusal. For see him for a few moments I doubt I must, lest he should take some rash resolutions; especially as he has reason to expect I will see him. But here your words, *That all punctilio is at an end, the moment I am out of my father's house*, added to the still more cogent considerations of duty and reputation, determined me once more against taking the rash step. And it will be very hard, (although no seasonable fainting, or wished-for fit, should stand my friend) if I cannot gain one month, or fortnight, or week. And I have still more hopes that I shall prevail for some delay, from my cousin's intimation that the good Dr. Lewen refuses to give his assistance to their projects, if they have not my consent, and thinks me cruelly used since, without taking notice that I am apprized of this, I can plead a scruple of conscience, and insist upon having that worthy divine's opinion upon it; in which, enforced as I shall enforce it, my mother will surely second me; my aunt Hervey, and Mrs. Norton, will support *her*; the suspension must follow; and I can but get away afterwards.

But, if they *will* compel me; if they *will* give me no time; if nobody *will* be moved; if it be resolved that the ceremony shall be read over my constrained hand—Why then—Alas!—What then!—I can but—But what? O my dear! This Solmes shall never have my vows I am resolved! And I will say nothing but 'No,' as long as I shall be able to speak. And who will presume to look upon such an act of violence as a marriage?—It is impossible, surely, that a father and mother can see such a dreadful compulsion offered to their child—But if mine should withdraw, and leave the task to my brother and sister, they will have no mercy.

I am grieved to be driven to have recourse to the following artifices.

I have given them a clue, by the feather of a pen sticking out, where they will find such of my hidden stories, as I intend they shall find.

Two or three little essays I have left easy to be seen, of my own writing.

About a dozen lines also of a letter begun to you, in which I express my hopes (although I say, that appearances are against me) that my friends will relent. They know from your mother, by my uncle Antony, that, some how or other, I now-and-then get a letter to you. In this piece of a letter, I declare renewedly my firm resolution to give up the man so obnoxious to my family, on their releasing me from the address of the other.

Near the essays, I have left the copy of my letter to Lady Drayton *; which affording arguments suitable to my case, may chance (thus accidentally to be fallen upon) to incline them to favour me.

I have reserves of pen and ink, you may believe; and one or two in the Ivy Summer House; with which I shall amuse myself, in order to lighten, if possible, those apprehensions which more and more affect me, as Wednesday, the day of trial, approaches.

LETTER XLVI.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

IVY SUMMER HOUSE, ELEVEN O'CLOCK.

He has not yet got my letter: and while I was contriving here how to send my officious gaoleress from me, that I might have time for the intended interview, and had hit upon an expedient, which I believe would have done, came my aunt, and furnished me with a much better. She saw my little table covered, preparative to my solitary dinner; and hoped, she told me, that this would be the last day that my friends would be deprived of my company at table.

You may believe me, my dear, that the thoughts of meeting Mr. Lovelace, for fear of being discovered, together with the contents of my cousin Dolly's letter, gave me great and visible emo-

* See Page 182.

tions. She took notice of them—'Why 'these sighs, why these heavings here?' said she, patting my neck—'O my dear 'niece, who would have thought so 'much natural sweetness could be so 'very unpersuadable?'

I could not answer her, and she proceeded—'I am come, I doubt, upon a 'very unwelcome errand. Some things 'that have been told us yesterday, which 'came from the mouth of one of the 'most desperate and insolent men in 'the world, convince your father, and 'all of us, that you still find means to 'write out of the house. Mr. Lovelace knows every-thing that is done 'here; and that as soon as done; and 'great mischief is apprehended from 'him, which you are as much concerned as any-body to prevent. Your 'mother has also some apprehensions 'concerning yourself, which yet she 'hopes are groundless; but, however, 'cannot be easy, nor will be permitted 'to be easy, if she would, unless (while 'you remain here in the garden, or in 'this summer-house) you give her the 'opportunity once more of looking into 'your closet, your cabinet, and drawers. 'It will be the better taken, if you give 'me chearfully your keys. I hope, my 'dear, you won't dispute it. Your desire of dining in this place was the 'more readily complied with for the 'sake of such an opportunity.'

I thought myself very lucky to be so well prepared by my cousin Dolly's means for this search: but yet I artfully made some scruples, and not a few complaints of this treatment; after which, I not only gave her the keys of all, but even officiously emptied my pockets before her, and invited her to put her fingers in my stays, that she might be sure I had no papers there.

This highly obliged her; and she said, she would represent my chearful compliance as it deserved, *let my brother and sister say what they would*. My mother in particular, she was sure, would rejoice at the opportunity given her to obviate, as she doubted not would be the case, some suspicions that were raised against me.

She then hinted, That there were methods taken to come at all Mr. Lovelace's secrets, and even, from his carelessness communicativeness, at some of *mine*; it being, she said, his custom, boastingly to prate to his very servants of his intentions, in particular cases. She added, that deep as he was thought to be, my brother was as deep as he, and fairly too hard for him at his own weapons—as one day it would be found.

I knew not, I said, the meaning of these dark hints. I thought the cunning she hinted at, on *both* sides, called rather for contempt than applause. I myself might have been put upon artifices which my heart disdained to practise, had I given way to the *resentment*, which I was bold to say, was much more justifiable than the actions that occasioned it: that it was evident to me from what she had said, that their present suspicions of me were partly owing to this supposed superior cunning of my brother, and partly to the consciousness, that the usage I met with might naturally produce a reason for such suspicions; that it was very unhappy for me, to be made the butt of my brother's wit; that it would have been more to his praise, to have aimed at shewing a kind heart, than a cunning head; that nevertheless, I wished he knew *himself* as well as I imagined *I* knew him; and he would then have less conceit of his abilities. Which abilities would, in my opinion, be less thought of, if his power to do ill offices were not much greater than they.

I was vexed. I could not help making this reflection. The dupe the other, too probably, makes of him, through his own spy, deserved it. But I so little approve of this low art in either, that were I but tolerably used, the vileness of that man, that Joseph Leman, should be enquired into.

She was sorry, she said, to find, that I thought so disparagingly of my brother. He was a young man both of learning and parts.

Learning enough I said, to make him vain of it among us women: but not of *parts* sufficient to make his learning valuable either to himself, or to anybody else.

She wished, indeed, that he had more good nature: but she feared, that I had too great an opinion of somebody else, to think so well of my brother, as a sister ought. Since, between the two, there was a sort of rivalry as to abilities, that made them hate one another.

'*Rivalry*, Madam!' said I—'If 'that be the case, or whether it be or

'not,

'not, I wiſh they both underſtood 'better than either of them ſeems to 'do, what it becomes gentlemen, and 'men of liberal education, to be, and 'to do.—Neither of them, then, would 'glory in what they ought to be aſhamed 'of.'

But waving this ſubject, it was not impoſſible, I ſaid, that they might find a little of my writing, and a pen or two, and a little ink, [Hated art!—or rather, hateful the neceſſity for it!] as I was not permitted to go up to put them out of the way: but if they did, I muſt be contented. And I aſſured her, that, take what time they pleaſed, I would not go in to diſturb them, but would be either in or near the garden, in this ſummer-houſe, or in the cedar one, or about my poultry-yard, or near the great caſcade, till I was ordered to return to my priſon. With like cunning I ſaid, that I ſuppoſed the unkind ſearch would not be made, till the ſervants had dined; becauſe I doubted not, that the pert Betty Barnes, who knew all the corners of my apartment and cloſet, would be employed in it.

She hoped, ſhe ſaid, that nothing could be found that would give a handle againſt me: for, ſhe would aſſure me, the motives to the ſearch, on my mother's part eſpecially, were, that ſhe hoped to find reaſon rather to acquit than to blame me; and that my father might be induced to ſee me to-morrow night, or Wedneſday morning, with temper. 'With *tenderneſs*, I ſhould 'rather ſay,' ſaid ſhe; 'for he is re-'ſolved ſo to do, if no new offence be 'given.'

'Ah! Madam,' ſaid I.

'Why that, "Ah! Madam," and 'ſhaking your head ſo ſignificantly?'

'I wiſh, Madam, that I may not 'have more reaſon to dread my father's 'continued diſpleaſure, than to hope 'for his returning tenderneſs.'

'You don't *know*, my dear!—'Things may take a turn—Things 'may not be ſo bad as you fear.'

'Deareſt Madam, have you any 'conſolation to give me?'

'Why, my dear, it is poſſible, that '*you* may be more compliable than 'you have been.'

'Why raiſed you my hopes, Ma-'dam!—Don't let me think my dear 'aunt Hervey cruel to a niece who truly 'honours her.'

'I may tell you more perhaps,' ſaid ſhe, '(but in confidence, in abſolute 'confidence) if the enquiry within 'come out in your favour. Do you 'know of any-thing above that can be 'found to your diſadvantage?'

'Some papers they will find, I 'doubt: but I muſt take conſequences. 'My brother and ſiſter will be at hand 'with their good-natured conſtruc-'tions. I am made deſperate, and 'care not what is found.'

'I hope, I *earneſtly* hope,' ſaid ſhe, 'that nothing can be found that will 'impeach your diſcretion; and then—'But I may ſay too much.'

And away ſhe went, having added to my perplexity.

But I now can think of nothing but this interview.—Would to Heaven it were over!—To meet to quarrel—But, let him take what meaſures he will, I will not ſtay a *moment* with him, if he be not quite calm and reſigned.

Don't you ſee how crooked ſome of my lines are? Don't you ſee how ſome of the letters ſtagger more than others? —That is when this interview is more in my head than my ſubject.

But, after all, ſhould I, *ought* I to meet him? How have I taken it for granted, that I ſhould!—I wiſh there were time to take your advice. Yet you are ſo loth to ſpeak *quite* out—But *that* I owe, as you own, to the difficulty of my ſituation.

I ſhould have mentioned, that in the courſe of this converſation I beſought my aunt to ſtand my friend, and to put in a word for me, on my approaching trial; and to endeavour to procure me *time for conſideration*, if I could obtain nothing elſe.

She told me, that, after the ceremony was performed, [*Odious confirmation of a hint in my coufin Dolly's letter!*] I ſhould have what time I pleaſed to reconcile myſelf to my lot, before cohabitation.

This put me out of all patience.

She requeſted of me in *her* turn, ſhe ſaid, that I would reſolve to meet them all with chearful duty, and with a ſpirit of abſolute acquieſcence. It was in my power to make them all happy. And how joyful would it be to her, ſhe ſaid, to ſee my father, my mother, my uncles, my brother, my ſiſter, all embracing me with raptures, and folding me by turns to their fond hearts, and congratulating each other on their reſtored

ſtored happineſs! Her own joy, ſhe ſaid, would probably make her motionleſs and ſpeechleſs, for a time: and for her Dolly—the poor girl, who had ſuffered in the eſteem of ſome, for her *grateful* attachment to me, would have every-body love her again.

Will you doubt, my dear, that my next trial will be the moſt affecting that I have yet had?

My aunt ſet forth all this in ſo ſtrong a light, and I was ſo particularly touched on my couſin Dolly's account, that, impatient as I was juſt before, I was greatly moved: yet could only ſhew by my ſighs and my tears, how deſirable ſuch an event would be to me, could it be brought about upon conditions with which it was poſſible for me to comply.

Here comes Betty Barnes with my dinner.

* *

THE wench is gone. The time of meeting is at hand. O that he may not come!—But ſhould I, or ſhould I not, meet him?—How I queſtion, without the poſſibility of a timely anſwer!

Betty, according to my leading hint to my aunt, boaſted to me, that ſhe was to be *employed*, as ſhe called it, after ſhe had ate her own dinner.

She ſhould be ſorry, ſhe told me, to have me found out. Yet 'twould be all for my good. I ſhould have it in my power to be forgiven for all at once, before Wedneſday night. The confident creature then, to ſtifle a laugh, put a corner of her apron in her mouth, and went to the door: and on her return, to take away, as I angrily bid her, ſhe begged my excuſe—'But—'But—' and then the ſaucy creature laughed again, ſhe could not help it; to think how I had drawn myſelf in by my Summer Houſe dinnering; ſince it had given ſo fine an opportunity, by way of ſurprize, to look into all my private hoards. She thought *ſomething was in the wind*, when my brother came in to my dining here ſo readily. Her young maſter was too hard for every-body. Squire Lovelace himſelf was nothing at all at a quick thought, to her young maſter.

My aunt mentioned Mr. Lovelace's boaſting behaviour to *his* ſervants: perhaps *he* may be ſo mean. But as to my brother, he always took a pride in making himſelf appear to be a man of parts and learning to *our* ſervants. *Pride* and *meanneſs*, I have often thought, are as nearly allied, and as cloſe borderers upon each other, as the poet tells us *wit* and *madneſs* are.

But why do I trouble you (and myſelf, at ſuch a criſis) with theſe impertinencies?—Yet I would forget, if I could, the neareſt evil, the interview; becauſe, my apprehenſions encreaſing as the hour is at hand, I ſhould, were my attention to be engroſſed by them, be unfit to ſee him, if he does come: and then he will have too much advantage over me, as he will have ſeeming reaſon to reproach me with change of reſolution.

The *upbraider*, you know, my dear, is in ſome ſenſe a ſuperior; while the *upbraided*, if with reaſon upbraided, muſt make a figure as ſpiritleſs as conſcious.

I know that this wretch will, if he *can*, be his own judge, and *mine* too. But the latter he ſhall not be.

I dare ſay, we ſhall be all to-pieces. But I don't care for that. It would be hard, if I, who have held it out ſo ſturdily to my father and uncles, ſhould not—But he is at the garden-door!

* *

I WAS miſtaken!—How many noiſes *un-like*, be made *like* to what one fears! —Why flutters the fool ſo!

* *

I WILL haſten to depoſit this. Then I will, for the laſt time, go to the uſual place, in hopes to find that he has got my letter. If he *has*, I will not meet him. If he has *not*, I will take it back, and ſhew him what I have written. That will break the ice, as I may ſay, and ſave me much circumlocution and reaſoning: and a ſtedfaſt adherence to that my written mind is all that will be neceſſary.—The interview muſt be as ſhort as poſſible; for ſhould it be diſcovered, it would furniſh a new and ſtrong pretence for the intended evil of Wedneſday next.

Perhaps I ſhall not be able to write again one while. Perhaps not, till I am the miſerable property of that Solmes! —But that ſhall never, never be, while I have my ſenſes.

If your ſervant find nothing from me by Wedneſday morning, you may conclude that I can then neither write to you, nor receive your favours.

In that caſe, pity and pray for me,

my

my beloved friend; and continue to me that place in your affection, which is the pride of my life, and the only comfort left to *your*

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER XLVII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

ST. ALBAN'S, TUESDAY MORN. PAST ONE.

O MY DEAREST FRIEND!

AFTER what I had reſolved upon, as by my former, what ſhall I write? What *can* I? With what conſciouſneſs, even by *letter*, do I approach you?—You will ſoon hear (if already you have not heard from the mouth of common fame) that your Clariſſa Harlowe is gone off with a man!

I am buſying myſelf to give you the particulars at large. The whole twenty-four hours of each day (to begin the moment I can fix) ſhall be employed in it till it is finiſhed: every-one of the hours, I mean, that will be ſpared me by this interrupting man, to whom I have made myſelf ſo fooliſhly accountable for too many of them. Reſt is departed from me. I have no call for that: and that has no balm for the wounds of my mind. So you'll have all thoſe hours without interruption till the account is ended.

But will you receive, ſhall you be *permitted* to receive my letters, after what I have done?

O my deareſt friend!—But I muſt make the beſt of it. I hope that will not be very bad! Yet am I convinced, that I did a raſh and inexcuſable thing, in meeting him; and all his tenderneſs, all his vows, cannot pacify my inward reproaches on that account.

The bearer comes to you, my dear, for the little parcel of linen which I ſent you with far better and more agreeable hopes.

Send not my letters. Send the linen only: except you will favour me with one line, to tell me, you love me ſtill; and that you will ſuſpend your cenſures till you have the whole before you. I am the readier to ſend thus early, becauſe if you have depoſited any-thing for me, you may cauſe it to be taken back, or withold any-thing you had but intended to ſend.

Adieu, my deareſt friend!—I beſeech you to love me ſtill—But, alas! what will your mother ſay?—What will mine?—What my other relations?—and what my dear Mrs. Norton? And how will my brother and ſiſter triumph!

I cannot at preſent tell you how, or where, you can direct to me. For very early ſhall I leave this place; harraſſed and fatigued to death. But, when I can do nothing elſe, conſtant uſe has made me able to write. Long, very long, has that been all my amuſement and pleaſure: yet could not *that* have been ſuch to me, had I not had *you*, my beſt beloved friend, to write to. Once more adieu. Pity and pray for *your*

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER XLVIII.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

TUESDAY, NINE O'CLOCK.

I Write, becauſe you enjoin me to do ſo. Love you ſtill!—How can I help it, if I would? You may believe how I ſtand aghaſt, your letter communicating the firſt news—Good God of heaven and earth!—But what ſhall I ſay?—I am all impatience for particulars.

Lord have mercy upon me!—But can it be?

My mother will *indeed* be aſtoniſhed!—How can I tell it her!—It was but laſt night (upon ſome jealouſies put into her head by your fooliſh uncle) that I aſſured her, and this upon the ſtrength of your *own* aſſurances, that neither man nor devil would be able to induce you to take a ſtep that was in the leaſt derogatory to the moſt punctilious honour.

But, once more, can it be? What woman, at this rate!—But, God preſerve you!

Let nothing eſcape you in your letters. Direct them for me however to Mrs. Knollys's, till further notice.

* *

OBSERVE, my dear, that I don't blame *you* by all this—Your relations only are in fault!—Yet how you came to change your mind is the ſurprizing thing.

How to break it to my mother, I know not. Yet, if ſhe hear it firſt from

from any other, and find I knew it before, she will believe it to be by my connivance!—Yet, as I hope to live, I know not how to break it to her.

But this is teazing you.—I am sure, without intention.

Let me now repeat my former advice—If you are *not* married by this time, be sure delay not the ceremony. Since things are as they are, I wish it were thought that you were privately married before you went away. If these men plead AUTHORITY to our pain, when we are *theirs*—why should we not, in such a case as *this*, make some good out of the hated word, for our reputation, when we are induced to violate a more natural one?

Your brother and sister [That vexes me almost as much as any-thing!] have now their ends. Now, I suppose, will go forward alterations of wills, and such-like spiteful doings.

* *

Miss Lloyd and Miss Biddulph this moment send up their names. They are out of breath, Kitty says, to speak to me—Easy to guess their errand!—I must see my mother, before I see them. I have no way but to shew her your letter to clear myself. I shall not be able to say a word, till she has run herself out of her first breath.—Forgive me, my dear—Surprize makes me write thus. If your messenger did not wait, and were not those young ladies below, I would write it over again, for fear of afflicting you.

I send what you write for. If there be any-thing else you want that is in my power, command without reserve *your ever-affectionate*

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XLIX.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

TUESDAY NIGHT.

I Think myself obliged to thank you, my dear Miss Howe, for your condescension, in taking notice of a creature who has occasioned you so much scandal.

I am grieved on this account, as much, I verily think, as for the evil itself.

Tell me—But yet I am afraid to know—what your mother said.

I long, and yet I dread, to be told, what the young ladies my companions, now never more perhaps to be so, say of me.

They cannot, however, say worse of me than I will of myself. Self-accusation shall flow in every line of my narrative where I think I am justly censurable. If any-thing can arise from the account I am going to give you, for extenuation of my fault, (for that is all a person can hope for, who cannot excuse herself) I know I may expect it from your friendship, though not from the charity of any other: since by this time I doubt not every mouth is opened against me; and all that know Clarissa Harlowe condemn the fugitive daughter.

* *

AFTER I had deposited my letter to you, written down to the last hour, as I may say, I returned to the Ivy Summer House; first taking back my letter from the loose bricks: and there I endeavoured, as coolly as my situation would permit, to recollect and lay together several incidents that had passed between my aunt and me; and, comparing them with some of the contents of my cousin Dolly's letter, I began to hope, that I needed not to be so very apprehensive as I have been of next Wednesday. And thus I argued with myself.

'Wednesday cannot possibly be the 'day they intend, although to intimi-'date me they may wish me to think it 'is; for the settlements are unsigned: 'nor have they been offered me to sign. 'I can chuse whether I will or will 'not put my hand to them; hard as it 'will be to refuse if my father tender 'them to me—Besides, did not my fa-'ther and mother propose, if I made 'compulsion necessary, to go to my 'uncle's themselves, in order to be 'out of the way of my appeals? 'Whereas they intend to be present on 'Wednesday. And however affect-'ing to me the thought of meeting 'them and all my friends in full assem-'bly is, perhaps it is the very thing I 'ought to wish for: since my brother 'and sister had such an opinion of my 'interest in them, that they got me 'excluded from their presence, as a 'measure which they thought previ-'ously necessary to carry on their de-'signs.

'Nor have I reason to doubt, but

'that'

'that' (as I had before argued with myself) 'I shall be able to bring over 'some of my relations to my party; 'and, being brought face to face with 'my brother, that I shall expose his 'malevolence, and of consequence 'weaken his power.

'Then, supposing the very worst, 'challenging the minister as I shall 'challenge him, he will not presume 'to proceed: nor surely will Mr. 'Solmes dare to accept my refusing 'and struggling hand.' And finally, 'if nothing else will do, nor procure 'me delay, I can plead scruples of 'conscience, and even pretend prior 'obligation;' for, my dear, I have given Mr. Lovelace room to hope (as you will see in one of my letters in your hands) that I will be no other man's while he is single, and gives me not wilful and premeditated cause of offence against him; and this in order to rein-in his resentments on the declared animosity of my brother and uncles to him. 'And as I shall appeal, 'or refer my scruples on this head, to 'the good Dr. Lewen, it is impossible 'but that my mother and aunt (if no-'body else) must be affected with this 'plea.'

Revolving cursorily these things, I congratulated myself, that I had resolved against going away with Mr. Lovelace.

I told you, my dear, that I would not spare myself; and I enumerate these particulars as so many arguments to condemn the actions I have been so unhappily betrayed into. An argument that concludes against me with the greater force, as I must acknowledge, that I was apprehensive, that what my cousin Dolly mentions as from Betty and from my sister, who told *her*, that she should tell *me*, in order to make me desperate, and perhaps *to push me upon some such step as I have been driven to take, as the most effectual means to ruin me with my father and uncles.*

God forgive me if I judge too hardly of their views!—But if I do *not*, it follows, that they laid a wicked snare for me; and that I have been caught in it.—And now may they triumph, if they *can* triumph, in the ruin of a sister, who never wished or intended hurt to them!

As the above kind of reasoning had lessened my apprehensions as to the Wednesday, it added to those I had of meeting Mr. Lovelace—Now, as it seemed, not only the nearest, but the heaviest evil; principally indeed because *nearest*; for little did I dream (foolish creature that I was, and every way beset!) of the event proving what it has proved. I expected a contention with him, it is true, as he had not my letter: but I thought it would be very strange, as I mentioned in one of my former*, if I, who had so steadily held out against characters so venerable, against authorities so sacred, as I may say, when I thought them unreasonably exerted, should not find myself more equal to such a trial as this; especially as I had so much reason to be displeased with him for not having taken away my letter.

On what a point of time may one's worldly happiness depend! Had I had but two hours more to consider of the matter, and to attend to and improve upon these new lights, as I may call them—But even then, perhaps, I might have given him a meeting.—Fool that I was! what had I to do to give him hope that I would *personally* acquaint him with the reason for my change of mind, if I did change it?

O my dear! an obliging temper is a very dangerous temper!—By endeavouring to gratify others, it is evermore disobliging itself!

When the bell rang to call the servants to dinner, Betty came to me, and asked, if I had any commands before she went to hers; repeating her hint, that she should be *employed*; adding, that she believed it was expected, that I should not come up till she came down, or till I saw my aunt or Miss Hervey.

I asked her some questions about the cascade, which had been out of order, and lately mended; and expressed a curiosity to see how it played, in order to induce her [How cunning to cheat myself, as it proved!] to go thither, if she found me not where she left me; it being at a part of the garden most distant from the Ivy Summer House.

She could have hardly got into the house when I heard the first signal—O how my heart fluttered!—But no time

* See Page 284.

was to be loſt. I ſtept to the garden-door; and ſeeing a clear coaſt, unbolted the already unlocked door—And there was he, all impatience, waiting for me.

A panick next to fainting ſeized me when I ſaw him. My heart ſeemed convulſed; and I trembled ſo, that I ſhould hardly have kept my feet, had he not ſupported me.

'Fear nothing, deareſt creature,' ſaid he—'Let us haſten away—The 'chariot is at hand—And, by this 'ſweet condeſcenſion, you have obliged 'me beyond expreſſion or return.'

Recovering my ſpirits a little, as he kept drawing me after him, 'O, Mr. 'Lovelace,' ſaid I, 'I cannot go with 'you—*Indeed* I cannot—I wrote you 'word ſo—Let go my hand, and you 'ſhall ſee my letter. It has lain there 'from yeſterday morning, till within 'this half-hour. I bid you watch to 'the laſt for a letter from me, leſt I 'ſhould be obliged to revoke the ap-'pointment; and had you followed the 'direction, you would have found it.'

'I have been watched, my deareſt 'life,' ſaid he, half out of breath—'I have been watched in every ſtep I 'took: and my truſty ſervant has been 'watched too, ever ſince Saturday; and 'dared not to come near your wall.—'And here we ſhall be diſcovered in a 'moment.—Speed away, my charmer '—This is the moment of your deli-'verance—If you neglect this oppor-'tunity, you *never* can have ſuch ano-'ther.'

'What is it you mean, Sir?—Let 'go my hand: for I tell you' [ſtrug-gling vehemently] 'that I will ſooner 'die than go with you.'

'Good God!' ſaid he, with a look of wildneſs and ſurprize, 'what is it I 'hear!—But' [ſtill drawing me after him, as he retreated farther from the door] 'it is no time to argue—By all 'that's good you muſt go—Surely 'you cannot doubt my honour, nor 'give me cauſe to queſtion your own.'

'As you value me, Mr. Lovelace, 'urge me no farther. I come fixed 'and reſolved. Let me give you the 'letter I had written. My further 'reaſons ſhall follow; and they will 'convince you, that I ought not to 'go.'

'Nothing, Madam, can convince 'me—By all that's ſacred, I will not 'leave you. To leave you now, 'would be to loſe you for ever.'

'Am I to be thus compelled?' in-terrupted I, with equal indignation and vehemence—'Let go my hands.—'I am reſolved not to go with you—'And I will convince you, that I 'ought not.'

'All my friends expect you, Ma-'dam—All your own are determined 'againſt you—Wedneſday next is the 'day, the important, perhaps the fa-'tal day! Would you ſtay to be Solmes's 'wife?—Can this be your determina-'tion at laſt?'

'No, never, never, will I be that 'man's—But I will not go with you! '[Draw me not thus—How dare you, 'Sir? I would not have ſeen you, but 'to tell you ſo.] I had not met you; 'but for fear you would have been 'guilty of ſome raſhneſs—And, once 'more, I will *not* go—What mean 'you?'—Striving with all my force to get from him.

'What can have poſſeſſed my angel,' ſaid he, [quitting my hands, and with a gentler voice] 'that after ſo much 'ill-uſage from your relations; vows 'ſo ſolemn on my part; an affection ſo 'ardent; you ſtab me with a refuſal to 'ſtand by your own appointment?'

'We have no time to talk, Mr. 'Lovelace. I will give you my rea-'ſons at a better opportunity. I can-'not go with you now—And, once 'more, urge me no farther—Surely I 'am not to be compelled by every-'body!'

'I ſee how it is,' ſaid he, with a de-jected, but paſſionate air—'What a ſe-'vere fate is mine—At length your 'ſpirit is ſubdued!—Your brother and 'ſiſter have prevailed; and I muſt give 'up all my hopes to a wretch ſo *truly* 'deſpicable—'

'Once more I tell you,' interrupted I, 'I never will be his—All may end 'on Wedneſday differently from what 'you expect.'

'And it may *not!*—And then, good 'heavens!'

'It is to be their laſt effort, as I 'have reaſon to believe.'

'And I have reaſon to believe ſo too '—Since, if you ſtay, you will inevita-bly be Solmes's wife.'

'Not ſo,' interrupted I—'I have 'obliged them in one point. They 'will be in good-humour with me. I 'ſhall gain time at leaſt. I am ſure I 'ſhall. I have ſeveral ways to gain 'time.'

'And

'And what, Madam, will gaining 'time do? It is plain you have not a 'hope beyond that—It is plain you 'have not, by putting all upon that 'precarious iſſue. O my deareſt, dear-'eſt life, let me beſeech you not to run 'a riſque of this conſequence. I can 'convince you, that it will be *more* 'than a riſque if you go back, that you 'will on Wedneſday next be Solmes's 'wife.—Prevent therefore, now that 'it is in your power to prevent, the fa-'tal miſchiefs that will follow ſuch a 'dreadful certainty.'

'While I have any room for hope, it 'concerns *your* honour, Mr. Lovelace, 'as well as mine; (if you have the va-'lue for me you pretend, and wiſh me 'to believe you) that my conduct in 'this great point ſhould juſtify my 'prudence.'

'Your prudence, Madam! When 'has that been queſtionable? Yet what 'ſtead has either your prudence or your 'duty ſtood you in, with people ſo 'ſtrangely determined?'

And then he pathetically enumerated the different inſtances of the harſh treatment I had met with; imputing all to the malice and caprice of a brother, who ſet every-body againſt him: and inſiſting, that I had no other way to bring about a reconciliation with my father and uncles, than by putting myſelf out of the power of my brother's inveterate malice.

'Your brother's whole reliance,' proceeded he, 'has been upon your 'eaſineſs to bear his inſults. Your 'whole family will ſeek to *you*, when 'you have freed yourſelf from this diſ-'graceful oppreſſion. When they 'know you are with thoſe who *can* and '*will* right you, they will give up to 'you your own eſtate. Why then,' putting his arm round me, and again drawing me with a gentle force after him, 'do you heſitate a moment?—'Now is the time—Fly with me then, 'I beſeech you, my deareſt creature! 'Truſt your perſecuted adorer. Have 'we not ſuffered in the ſame cauſe? 'If any imputations are caſt upon you, 'give me the honour *(as I ſhall be 'found to deſerve it)* to call you mine; 'and, when you are ſo, ſhall I not be 'able to protect both your perſon and 'character?'

'Urge me no more, Mr. Lovelace, 'I conjure you. You yourſelf have 'given me a hint, which I will ſpeak 'plainer to, than prudence, perhaps, 'on any other occaſion, would allow. 'I am convinced, that Wedneſday 'next (if I had time I would give you 'my reaſons) is not intended to be the 'day we had both ſo much dreaded: 'and if after that day ſhall be over, I 'find my friends determined in Mr. 'Solmes's favour, I will then contrive 'ſome way to meet you with Miſs 'Howe, who is not your enemy; and 'when the ſolemnity has paſſed, I 'ſhall think that ſtep a duty, which '*till* then will be criminal to take; ſince 'now my father's authority is unim-'peached by any greater.'

'Deareſt Madam—'

'Nay, Mr. Lovelace, if you now diſ-'pute—if, after this more favourable 'declaration, than I had the thought 'of making, you are not ſatisfied, I 'ſhall know what to think both of 'your gratitude and generoſity.'

'The caſe, Madam, admits not of 'this alternative. I am all gratitude 'upon it. I cannot expreſs how much 'I ſhould be delighted with the charm-'ing hope you have given me, were 'you not next Wedneſday, if you ſtay, 'to be another man's. Think, deareſt 'creature! what an heightening of my 'anguiſh the diſtant hope you bid me 'look up to, is, taken in this light!'

'Depend, depend upon it, I will die 'ſooner than be Mr. Solmes's. If 'you would have me rely upon *your* 'honour, why ſhould you doubt of '*mine?*'

'I doubt not your *honour*, Madam; 'your *power* is all I doubt. You ne-'ver, never, can have ſuch another 'opportunity.—Deareſt creature, per-'mit me'—And he was again drawing me after him.

'Whether, Sir, do you draw me?—'Leave me this moment—Do you ſeek 'to keep me till my return ſhall grow 'dangerous or impracticable? This 'moment let me go, if you would have 'me think tolerably of you.'

'My happineſs, Madam, both here 'and hereafter, and the ſafety of all 'your implacable family, depend upon 'this moment.'

'To Providence, Mr. Lovelace, and 'to the law, will I leave the ſafety of 'my friends. You ſhall not threaten 'me into a raſhneſs that my heart con-'demns!—Shall I, to promote your

'happineſs, as you call it, deſtroy all 'my future peace of mind?'

'You trifle with me, my dear life, 'juſt as our better proſpects begin to 'open. The way is clear; juſt now 'it is clear; but you may be prevented 'in a moment. What is it you doubt? '—May I periſh eternally, if your 'will ſhall not be a law to me in every 'thing! All my relations expect you. 'Your own appointment calls upon 'you. Next Wedneſday!—Deareſt 'creature! think of next Wedneſday! '—And to what is it I urge you, but 'to take a ſtep that ſooner than any 'other will reconcile you to all whom 'you have moſt reaſon to value in your 'family?'

'Let me judge for myſelf, Sir. Do 'not you, who blame my friends for en-'deavouring to compel me, *yourſelf* ſeek 'to compel me. I won't bear it. Your 'earneſtneſs gives me greater appre-'henſions, and greater reluctance. Let 'me go back, then—Let me, before it 'is too late, go back, that it may not 'be worſe for both—What mean you 'by this forcible treatment? Is it thus 'that I am to judge of the entire ſub-'miſſion to my will which you have ſo 'often vowed?—Unhand me this mo-'ment, or I will cry out for help.'

'I will obey you, my deareſt crea-'ture!'—And quitted my hand with a look full of tender deſpondency, that, knowing the violence of his temper, half-concerned me for him. Yet I was haſtening from him, when, with a ſolemn air, looking upon his ſword, but catching, as it were, his hand from it, he folded both his arms, as if a ſudden thought had recovered him from an intended raſhneſs.

'Stay one moment—But one mo-'ment ſtay, O beſt beloved of my ſoul! '—Your retreat is ſecure, if you *will* 'go: the key lies down at the door.—'But, O Madam, next *Wedneſday*, and 'you are Mr. Solmes's!—Fly me not 'ſo eagerly—Hear me but a few words.'

When near the garden-door, I ſtopped; and was the more ſatisfied, as I ſaw the key there, by which I could let myſelf in again at pleaſure. But, being uneaſy leſt I ſhould be miſſed, told him, I could ſtay no longer. I had already ſtaid too long. I would write to him all my reaſons. 'And depend 'upon it, Mr. Lovelace,' ſaid I, [juſt upon the point of ſtooping for the key, in order to return] 'I will die, rather 'than have that man. You know 'what I have promiſed, if I find my-'ſelf in danger.'

'One word, Madam, however; one 'word more,' [approaching me, his arms ſtill folded, as if, as I thought, he would not be tempted to miſchief.] 'Remember only, that I come at your 'appointment, to redeem you, at the 'hazard of my life, from your gaolers 'and perſecutors, with a reſolution, 'God is my witneſs, or may he for 'ever blaſt me!' [that was his ſhocking imprecation] 'to be a father, un-'cle, brother, and, as I humbly hoped, 'in your own good time, a *huſband* to 'you, all in one. But ſince I find you 'are ſo ready to cry out for help againſt 'me, which muſt bring down upon me 'the vengeance of all your family, I 'am contented to run all riſques. I 'will not aſk you to retreat with *me*; 'I will attend you into the garden, and 'into the *houſe*, if I am not intercepted.

'Nay, be not ſurprized, Madam. 'The help you would have called for, 'I will attend you to; for I will face 'them all: but not as a revenger, if 'they provoke me not too much. You 'ſhall ſee what I can further bear for 'your ſake—And let us both ſee, if 'expoſtulation, and the behaviour of 'a gentleman *to* them, will not pro-'cure me the treatment due to a gen-'tleman *from* them.'

Had he offered to draw his ſword upon himſelf, I was prepared to have deſpiſed him for ſuppoſing me ſuch a poor novice, as to be intimidated by an artifice ſo common. But this reſolution, uttered with ſo ſerious an air, of accompanying me in to my friends made me gaſp with terror.

'What mean you, Mr. Lovelace?' ſaid I: 'I beſeech you leave me—'Leave me, Sir, I beſeech you.'

'Excuſe me, Madam! I beg you to 'excuſe me. I have long enough 'ſkulked like a thief about theſe lonely 'walls—Long, too long, have I borne 'the inſults of your brother, and other 'of your relations. Abſence but 'heightens malice. I am deſperate. I 'have but this one chance for it; for is 'not the day after to-morrow *Wedneſ-'day?* I have encouraged virulence by 'my tameneſs.—Yet *tame* I will ſtill 'be. You ſhall ſee, Madam, what I 'will bear for your ſake. My ſword

'ſhall

'shall be put sheathed into your hands.' [And he offered it to me in the scabbard]—'My heart, if you please,' clapping one hand upon his breast, 'shall afford a sheath for your brother's 'sword. Life is nothing if I lose you '—Be pleased, Madam, to shew me the 'way into the garden,' [moving towards the door.] 'I will attend you, 'though to my fate!—But too happy, 'be it what it will, if I receive it in 'your presence. Lead on, dear creature!' [putting his sword into his belt]—'You shall see what I can bear 'for you.' And he stooped and took up the key, and offered it to the lock; but dropped it again, without opening the door, upon my earnest expostulations.

'What can you mean, Mr. Lovelace?'—said I—'Would you thus 'expose *yourself?* Would you thus expose *me?*—Is this your generosity? 'Is every-body to take advantage thus 'of the weakness of my temper?'

And I wept. I could not help it.

He threw himself upon his knees at my feet—'Who can bear,' said he, [with an ardour that could not be feigned, his own eyes glistening] 'who can 'bear to behold such sweet emotion? '—O charmer of my heart,' [and, respectfully still kneeling, he took my hand with both his, pressing it to his lips] 'command me *with* you, command 'me *from* you; in every way I am all 'implicit obedience—But I appeal to 'all you know of your relations cruelty 'to *you*, their determined malice against 'me, and as determined favour to the '*man* you tell me you hate; (and, oh! 'Madam, if you did not hate him, I 'should hardly think there would be a 'merit in your approbation, place it 'where you would)—I appeal to every-thing you know, to all you have 'suffered, whether you have not reason to be apprehensive of *that* Wednesday, which is my terror!—Whether you can possibly have such another opportunity—The chariot ready: 'my friends with impatience expecting 'the result of *your own* appointment: 'a man whose will shall be entirely 'your will, imploring you, thus, 'on his knees imploring you—to be '*your own mistress*; that is all: *nor 'will I ask for your favour, but as 'upon full proof I shall appear to deserve it.* Fortune, alliance, unobjectible!—O my beloved creature!' pressing my hand once more to his lips, 'let not such an opportunity slip. You 'never, never, will have such another.'

I bid him rise. He arose; and I told him, that were I not thus unaccountably hurried by his impatience, I doubted not to convince him, that both he and I had looked upon next Wednesday with greater apprehension than was necessary. I was proceeding to give him my reasons; but he broke in upon me.

'Had I, Madam, but the shadow of 'a probability to hope what *you* hope, I 'would be all obedience and resignation. But the licence is actually got; 'the parson is provided; the pedant 'Brand is the man. O my dearest 'creature, do these preparations mean 'only a trial?'

'You know not, Sir, were the worst 'to be intended, and weak as you think 'me, what a spirit I have: you know 'not what I can do, and how I can resist, when I think myself meanly or 'unreasonably dealt with: nor do you 'know what I have already suffered, 'what I have already borne, knowing 'to whose unbrotherly instigations all 'is to be ascribed—'

'I may expect all things, Madam,' interrupted he, 'from the nobleness of 'your mind. But your spirits may 'fail you—What may not be apprehended from the invincible temper of 'a father so positive, to a daughter so 'dutiful?—Fainting will not save you: 'they will not, perhaps, be sorry for 'such an effect of their barbarity. 'What will signify expostulations 'against a ceremony performed? Must 'not *all*, the *dreadful all*, follow, that 'is torture to my heart but to think 'of? Nobody to appeal to, of what 'avail will your resistance be against 'the consequences of a rite witnessed 'to by the imposers of it; and those 'your nearest relations?'

I was sure, I said, of procuring a delay at least. Many ways I had to procure delay. Nothing could be so fatal to us both, as for me now to be found with him. My apprehensions on this score, I told him, grew too strong for my heart. I should think very hardly of him, if he sought to detain me longer. But his acquiescence should engage my gratitude.

And then stooping to take up the key

key to let myself into the garden, he ſtarted, and looked as if he had heard ſomebody near the door, on the inſide; clapping his hand on his ſword.

This frighted me ſo, that I thought I ſhould have ſunk down at his feet. But he inſtantly re-aſſured me: he thought, he ſaid, he had heard a ruſtling againſt the door; but *had* it been ſo, the noiſe would have been ſtronger. It was only the effect of his apprehenſion for me.

And then taking up the key, he preſented it to me—'If you *will* go, Madam—Yet I cannot, cannot leave you!—I muſt enter the garden with you—Forgive me, but I *muſt* enter the garden with you.'

'And will you, will you thus ungenerouſly, Mr. Lovelace, take advantage of my fears?—of my wiſhes to prevent miſchief? I, vain fool, to be concerned for every one; nobody for me!'

'Deareſt creature!' interrupted he, holding my hand, as I tremblingly offered to put the key to the lock—'Let *me*, if you *will* go, open the door. But once more, conſider, could you poſſibly obtain that delay which ſeems to be your only dependence, whether you may not be cloſer confined? I know they have already had *that* in conſideration. Will you not, in this caſe, be prevented from correſponding either with Miſs Howe, or with me?—Who then ſhall aſſiſt you in your eſcape, if eſcape you would?—From your chamber-window only permitted to view the garden you muſt not enter into, how will you wiſh for the opportunity you now have, if your hatred to Solmes continue!—But, alas! that cannot continue. If you go back, it muſt be from the impulſes of a yielding (which you'll call a dutiful) heart, tired and teazed out of your own will.'

'I have no patience, Sir, to be thus conſtrained. Muſt I never be at liberty to follow my own judgment? Be the conſequence what it may, I will not be thus conſtrained.'

And then, freeing my hand, I again offered the key to the door.

Down the ready kneeler dropt between me and that: 'And can you, can you, Madam, once more on my knees let me aſk you, look with an indifferent eye upon the evils that may follow? Provoked as I have been, and triumphed over as I ſhall be, if your brother ſucceeds, my *own* heart ſhudders, at times, at the thoughts of what *muſt* happen; and can *yours* be unconcerned? Let me beſeech you, deareſt creature, to conſider all theſe things; and loſe not this only opportunity. My intelligence—'

'Never, Mr. Lovelace,' interrupted I, 'give ſo much credit to the words of a traitor. Your baſe intelligencer is but a ſervant. He may pretend to know more than he has grounds for, in order to earn the wages of corruption. You know not what contrivances I can find out.'

I was once more offering the key to the lock, when, ſtarting from his knees, with a voice of affrightment, loudly whiſpering, and as if out of breath, '*They are at the door, my beloved creature!*' And taking the key from me, he fluttered with it, as if he would double-lock it. And inſtantly a voice from within cried out, burſting againſt the door, as if to break it open, the perſon repeating his violent puſhes, '*Are you there?—Come up this moment!—This moment!—Here they are—Here they are both together!—Your piſtol this moment!—Your gun!*'—Then another puſh, and another. He at the ſame moment drew his ſword, and clapping it naked under his arm, took both my trembling hands in his; and, drawing me ſwiftly after him, 'Fly, fly, my charmer! this moment is all you have for it!' ſaid he.—'Your brother!—Your uncles!—Or this Solmes!—They will inſtantly burſt the door.—Fly, my deareſt life! if you would not be more cruelly uſed than ever—If you would not ſee two or three murders committed at your feet, fly, fly, I beſeech you!'

'O Lord!—Help, help!' cried the fool, all in amaze and confuſion, frighted beyond the power of controuling.

Now behind me, now before me, now on this ſide, now on that, turned I my affrighted face, in the ſame moment; expecting a furious brother here, armed ſervants there, an enraged ſiſter ſcreaming, and a father armed with terror in his countenance more dreadful than even the drawn ſword which I ſaw, or thoſe I apprehended. I ran as faſt as he; yet knew not that I ran; my fears adding wings

Plate III. Published as the Act directs, by Harrison & Co. Jan.y 1.1784.

wings to my feet, at the same time that they took all power of thinking from me—My fears, which probably would not have suffered me to know what course to take, had I not had him to urge and draw me after him: especially as I beheld a man, who must have come out of the door, keeping us in his eye, running now towards us; then back to the garden; beckoning and calling to others, whom I supposed *he* saw, although the turning of the wall hindered *me* from seeing them; and whom I imagined to be my brother, my father, and their servants.

Thus terrified, I was got out of sight of the door in a very few minutes: and then, although quite breathless between running and apprehension, he put my arm under his, his drawn sword in the other hand, and hurried me on still faster: my voice, however, contradicting my action; crying, 'No, no, no,' all the while; straining my neck to look back, as long as the walls of the garden and park were within sight, and till he brought me to the chariot; where, attending, were two armed servants of his own, and two of Lord M.'s on horseback.

Here I must suspend my relation for a while: for now I am come to this sad period of it, my indiscretion stares me in the face; and my shame and my grief give me a compunction that is more poignant, methinks, than if I had a dagger in my heart. To have it to reflect, that I should so inconsiderately give in to an interview, which, had I known either myself or him, or in the least considered the circumstances of the case, I might have supposed, would put me into the power of his resolution, and out of that of my own reason.

For, might I not have believed, that *he*, who thought he had cause to apprehend that he was on the point of losing a person who had cost him so much pains and trouble, would not hinder her, if possible, from returning? That he, who knew I had promised to give him up for ever, if insisted on as a condition of reconciliation, would not endeavour to put it out of my power to do so? In short, that he, who had artfully forborne to send for my letter, (for he could *not* be watched, my dear) lest he should find in it a countermand to my appointment, (as I myself could apprehend, although I profited not by the apprehension) would want a device to keep me with him till the danger of having our meeting discovered might throw me absolutely into his power, to avoid my own worse usage, and the mischiefs which might have ensued, (perhaps in my very sight) had my friends and he met?

But if it should come out, that the person within the garden was his corrupted implement, employed to frighten me away with him, do you think, my dear, that I shall not have reason to hate him and myself still more? I hope his heart cannot be so deep and so vile a one: I hope it cannot! But how came it to pass, that one man could get out at the garden-door, and no more? How, that that man kept aloof, as it were, and pursued us not; nor ran back to alarm the house? My fright, and my distance, would not let me be certain; but really this man, as I now recollect, had the air of that vile Joseph Leman.

O why, why, my dear friends!—But wherefore blame I them, when I had argued myself into a hope, not improbable, that even the dreadful trial I was to undergo so soon, might turn out better than if I had been directly carried away from the presence of my once indulgent parents, who might possibly intend that trial to be the last I should have had?

Would to Heaven, that I had stood it, however! Then if I had afterwards done, what now I have been prevailed upon, or perhaps foolishly frightened to do, I should not have been stung so much by inward reproach as now I am: and this would have been a great evil avoided.

You know, my dear, that your Clarissa's mind was ever above justifying her own failings by those of others. God forgive those of my friends who have acted cruelly by me! But their faults *are* their own, and not excuses for mine. And mine began early: for I ought not to have corresponded with him.

O the vile encroacher! how my indignation, at times, rises at him! Thus to lead a young creature (too much indeed relying upon her own strength) from evil to evil!—This last evil, although the *remote*, yet *sure* consequence of my first—my prohibited correspondence! By a father *early* prohibited.

How much more properly had I acted, with

with regard to that correſpondence, had I, once for all, when he was forbidden to viſit me, and I to receive his viſits, pleaded the authority by which I ought to have been bound, and denied to write to him!—But I thought I could *proceed*, or *ſtop*, as I pleaſed. I ſuppoſed it concerned *me, more than any other, to be the arbitreſs of the quarrels of unruly ſpirits*—And now I find my preſumption puniſhed—Puniſhed, as other ſins frequently are, by *itſelf!*

As to this laſt raſhneſs; now, that it is too late, I plainly ſee how I ought to have conducted myſelf. As he knew I had but one way of tranſmitting to him the knowledge of what befel me; as he knew, that my fate was upon a criſis with my friends; and that I had, in my letter to him, reſerved the liberty of revocation; I ſhould not have been ſolicitous whether he had got my letter or not: when he had come, and found I did not anſwer his ſignal, he would preſently have reſorted to the looſe bricks, and there been ſatisfied by the date of my letter, that it was his own fault, that he had it not before. But, *governed by the ſame pragmatical motives* which induced me to correſpond with him at firſt, I was again afraid, truly, with my fooliſh and buſy preſcience, and the diſappointment would have thrown him into the way of receiving freſh inſults from the ſame perſons; which might have made him guilty of ſome violence to them. And ſo, to ſave him an *apprehended* raſhneſs, I have ruſhed into a *real* one myſelf. And what vexes me more, is, that it is plain to me now, by all his behaviour, that he had as great a confidence in my weakneſs, as I had in my own ſtrength. And ſo, in a point entirely relative to my honour, he has triumphed; for he has not been miſtaken in me, while I have in myſelf!

Tell me, my dear Miſs Howe, tell me truly, if your unbiaſſed heart does not deſpiſe me?—It muſt! for your mind and mine were ever *one*; and I deſpiſe *myſelf!*—And well I may: for could the giddieſt and moſt inconſiderate girl in England have done worſe than I ſhall appear to have done in the eye of the world? Since my crime will be known without the provocations, and without the artifices of the betrayer too; while it will be a high aggravation, that better things were expected from me, than from many others.

You charge me *to marry the firſt opportunity*—Ah! my dear! *another* of the bleſſed effects of my folly—That's as much in my power now as—as I am myſelf!—And can I beſides give a ſanction immediately to his deluding arts?—Can I *avoid* being angry with him for tricking me thus, as I may ſay, (and as I have called it to him) out of *myſelf?*—For compelling me to take a ſtep ſo contrary to all my reſolutions, and aſſurances given to you; a ſtep ſo dreadfully inconvenient to myſelf; ſo diſgraceful and ſo grievous (as it muſt be) to my dear mother, were I to be leſs regardful of any other of my family or friends—You don't know, nor can you imagine, my dear, how I am mortified!—How much I am ſunk in my own opinion!—I, that was propoſed for an example, truly, to others!—O that I were again in my father's houſe, ſtealing down with a letter *to* you; my heart beating with expectation of finding one *from* you!

* * *

This is the Wedneſday morning I dreaded ſo much, that I once thought of it as the day of my doom: but of the Monday, it is plain, I ought to have been moſt apprehenſive. Had I ſtaid, and had the worſt I dreaded happened, my friends would then have been anſwerable for the conſequences, if any bad ones had followed—But now, I have this *only* conſolation left me, (a very poor one, you'll ſay!) that I have cleared *them* of blame, and taken it all upon *myſelf!*

You will not wonder to ſee this narrative ſo diſmally ſcrawled. It is owing to different pens and ink, all bad, and written by ſnatches of time; my hand trembling too with fatigue and grief.

I will not add to the length of it, by the particulars of his behaviour to me, and of our converſation at St. Alban's, and ſince; becauſe thoſe will come in courſe in the continuation of my ſtory; which no doubt you will expect from me.

Only thus much I will ſay, that he is extremely reſpectful (even obſequiouſly ſo) at preſent, though I am ſo much diſſatisfied with him and myſelf, that he has hitherto had no great cauſe to praiſe my complaiſance to him. Indeed, I can hardly, at times, bear the ſeducer in my ſight.

The lodgings I am in are inconvenient. I ſhall not ſtay in them: ſo it ſignifies

signifies nothing to tell you how to direct to me hither. And where my next may be, as yet I know not.

He knows that I am writing to you; and has offered to send my letter, when finished, by a servant of his. But I thought I could not be too cautious, as I am now situated, in having a letter of this importance conveyed to you. Who knows what such a man may do? So very wicked a contriver! The contrivance, if a contrivance, to get me away, so insolently mean!—But I hope it is not a contrivance neither!—Yet, be that as it will, I must say, that the *best* of him, and of my prospects with him, are bad: and yet, having enrolled myself among the too-late repenters, who shall pity me?

Nevertheless, I will dare to hope for a continued interest in your affections, [I shall be miserable indeed if I may not!] and to be remembered in your daily prayers. For neither time nor accident shall ever make me cease to be *your faithful and affectionate*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LETTER L.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOSEPH LEMAN.

SAT. APRIL 8.

HONEST JOSEPH,

AT length your beloved young lady has consented to free herself from the cruel treatment she has so long borne. She is to meet me without the garden-door at about four o'clock on Monday afternoon. I told you she had promised to do so. She has confirmed her promise. Thank Heaven, she has confirmed her promise.

I shall have a chariot-and-six ready in the by-road fronting the private path to Harlowe Paddock; and several of my friends and servants not far off, armed to protect her, if there be occasion: but every-one charged to avoid mischief. That, you know, has always been my principal care.

All my fear is, that when she comes to the point, the over-niceness of her principles will make her waver, and want to go back: although *her* honour is *my* honour, you know, and *mine* is *hers*. If she should, and should I be unable to prevail upon her, all your past services will avail nothing, and she will be lost to me for ever: the prey then of that cursed Solmes, whose vile stinginess will never permit him to do good to any of the servants of the family.

I have no doubt of your fidelity, honest Joseph; nor of your zeal to serve an injured gentleman, and an oppressed young lady. You see by the confidence I repose in you, that I have *not*; more particularly, on this very important occasion, in which your assistance may crown the work: for, if she waver, a little innocent contrivance will be necessary.

Be very mindful, therefore, of the following directions: take them into your heart. This will probably be your last trouble, until my beloved and I are joined in holy wedlock: and then we will be sure to take care of you. You know what I have promised. No man ever reproached me for breach of word.

These, then, honest Joseph, are they:

Contrive to be in the garden, in *disguise*, if possible, and unseen by your young lady. If you find the garden-door unbolted, you will know that she and I are together, although you should not see her go out at it. It will be locked, but my key shall be on the ground just without the door, that you may open it with yours, as it may be needful.

If you hear our voices parleying, keep at the door till I cry 'Hem, hem,' twice: but be watchful for this signal; for I must not hem very loud, lest she should take it for a signal. Perhaps, in struggling to prevail upon the dear creature, I may have an opportunity to strike the door hard with my elbow, or heel, to confirm you—Then you are to make a violent burst against the door, as if you would break it open, drawing backward and forward the bolt in a hurry: then, with another push, but with more noise than strength, lest the lock give way, cry out, (as if you saw some of the family) 'Come up, come up, instantly!—Here 'they are! Here they are!—Hasten!—'This instant! hasten!' And mention swords, pistols, guns, with as terrible a voice as you can cry out with. Then shall I prevail upon her, no doubt, if loth before, to fly. If I cannot, I will enter the garden with her, and the house too, be the consequence what it will. But so affrighted, there is no question but she will fly.

When you think us at ſufficient diſtance, [and I ſhall raiſe my voice urging her ſwifter flight, that you may gueſs at *that*] then open the door with your key: but you muſt be ſure to open it very cautiouſly, leſt we ſhould not be far enough off. I would not have her know you have a hand in this matter, out of my great regard to you.

When you have opened the door, take your key out of the lock, and put it in your pocket: then ſtooping for mine, put it in the lock on the *inſide*, that it may appear as if the door was opened by herſelf, with a key, which they will ſuppoſe of my procuring, (it being new) and left open by us.

They *ſhould* conclude ſhe is gone off by her own conſent, that they may not purſue us: that they may ſee no hopes of tempting her back again. In either caſe, miſchief might happen, you know.

But you muſt take notice, that you are only to open the door with your key, in caſe none of the family come up to interrupt us, and before we are quite gone: for, if they do, you'll find by what follows, that you muſt not open the door at all. Let them, on breaking it open, or by getting over the wall, find my key on the ground, if they will.

If they do not come to interrupt us, and if you, by help of your key, come out, follow us at a diſtance; and, with uplifted hands, and wild and impatient geſtures, (running backward and forward, for fear you ſhould come too near us; and as if you ſaw ſomebody coming to your aſſiſtance) cry out for help, help, and to haſten. Then ſhall we be ſoon at the chariot.

Tell the family, that you ſaw me enter a chariot with her: a dozen, or more, men on horſeback, attending us; all armed; ſome with blunderbuſſes, as you believe; and that we took the quite contrary way to that we ſhall take.

You ſee, honeſt Joſeph, how careful I am, as well as you, to avoid miſchief.

Obſerve to keep at ſuch a diſtance that ſhe may not diſcover who you are. Take long ſtrides, to alter your gaite; and hold up your head, honeſt Joſeph; and ſhe'll not know it to be you. Mens airs and gaites are as various and as peculiar as their faces. Pluck a ſtake out of one of the hedges; and tug at it, though it may come eaſy: this, if ſhe turn back, will look terrible, and account for your not following us faſter. Then, returning with it, ſhouldered, brag to the family what you would have done, could you have overtaken us, rather than your young lady ſhould have been carried off by ſuch a—And you may call me names, and curſe me. And theſe airs will make you look valiant, and in earneſt. You ſee, honeſt Joſeph, I am always contriving to give *you* reputation. No man ſuffers by ſerving me.

But, if our parley ſhould laſt longer than I wiſh; and if any of her friends miſs her before I cry, 'Hem, hem,' twice; then, in order to ſave yourſelf, (which is a very great point with me, I aſſure you) make the ſame noiſe as above: but, as I directed before, open not the door with your key. On the contrary, wiſh for a key with all your heart; but for fear any of them ſhould by accident have a key about them, keep in readineſs half a dozen little gravel-ſtones, no bigger than peas, and thruſt two or three ſlily into the key-hole; which will hinder their key from turning round. It is good, you know, Joſeph, to provide againſt every accident in ſuch an important caſe as this. And let this be your cry, inſtead of the other, if any of my enemies come in your ſight, as you ſeem to be trying to burſt the door open, 'Sir! Sir!' or, 'Madam! 'Madam! O Lord, haſten! O Lord, 'haſten! Mr. Lovelace!—Mr. Love-'lace!'—And very loud—And that ſhall quicken me more than it ſhall thoſe you call to.—If it be Betty, and only Betty, I ſhall think worſe of your art of making love *, than of your fidelity, if you can't find a way to amuſe her, and put her upon a falſe ſcent.

You muſt tell them, that your young lady ſeemed to run as faſt off with me, as I with her. This will alſo confirm to them that all purſuit is in vain. An end will hereby be put to Solmes's hopes: and her friends, after a while, will be more ſtudious to be reconciled to her, than to get her back. So you will be an happy inſtrument of great good to all round. And this will one day be acknowledged by both families. You will then be every-one's favourite;

* See Page 218.

and

and every good ſervant, for the future, will be proud to be likened to honeſt Joſeph Leman.

If ſhe ſhould gueſs at you, or find you out, I have it already in my head to write a letter for you to copy *; which occaſionally produced, will ſet you right with her.

This one time be diligent, be careful; this will be the crown of all: and once more, depend for a recompence upon the honour of *your aſſured friend*,

R. LOVELACE.

You need not be ſo much afraid of going too far with Betty. If you *ſhould* make a match with her, ſhe is a very likely creature, though a vixen, as you ſay. I have an admirable receipt to cure a termagant wife.—Never fear, Joſeph, but thou ſhalt be maſter of thine houſe. If ſhe be very troubleſome, I can teach thee how to break her heart in a twelvemonth; and *honeſtly* too;—or the precept would not be mine.

I incloſe a new earneſt of my future favour.

LETTER LI.

TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQUIER, HIS HONNER.

SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 9.

HONNERED SIR,

I Muſt confeſſe I am infinnitely obliged to your honner's bounty. But this laſt command!—It ſeems ſo intricket! Lord be merciful to me, how have I been led from littel ſtepps to grate ſtepps!—And if I ſhould be found out!—But your honner ſays, you will take me into your honner's ſarviſe, and proteckt me, if as I ſhould at any time be found out; and raiſe my wages beſides; or ſet me upp in a good inne; which is my ambiſhion. And you will be honnerable and kind to my deareſt young lady, God love her.—But who can be unkind to ſhe?

I will do the beſt I am able, ſince your honner will be apt to leſe her, as your honner ſays, if I do not; and a man ſo ſtingie will be apt to gain her. But maybap my deareſte young lady will not make all this trubble needful. If ſhe has promiſſed, ſhe will ſtand to it, I dare to ſay.

I love your honner for contriveing to ſave miſchiff ſo well. I thought till I know'd your honner, that you was verry miſchevous, and pleſe your honner: but find it to be clene contrary. Your honner, it is plane, means mighty well by every-body, as far as I ſee. As I am ſure I do myſelf; for I am, althoff a very plane man, and all that, a very honneſt one, I thank my God. And have good principels, and have kept my young lady's preſſepts always in mind: for ſhe goes no-where, but ſaves a ſoul or two, more or leſs.

So, commending myſelf to your honner's further favour, not forgetting the inne, when your honner ſhall ſo pleaſe, and a good one offers; for plaſes are no inherritanſes now-a-days. And, I hope, your honner will not think me a diſhoneſt man for ſarvinge your honner agenſt my duty, as it may look; but only as my conſhence clears me.

Be pleaſed, howſomever, if it like your honner, not to call me, *honneſt Joſeph*, and *honneſt Joſeph*, ſo often. For, althoff I think myſelf very honneſt, and all that; yet I am touched a little, for fear I ſhould not do the quite right thing: and too-beſides, your honner has ſuch a feſſeſhious way with you, as that I hardly know whether you are in jeſt or earneſt, when your honner calls me honneſt ſo often.

I am a very plane man, and ſeldom have writ to ſuch honourable gentlemen; ſo you will be good enuff to paſs by every-thing, as I have often ſaid, and need not now ſay over again.

As to Mrs. Betty; I tho'te, indeed, ſhe looked above me. But ſhe comes on very well, nathelſſe. I could like her better, iff ſhe was better to my young lady. But ſhe has too much wit for ſo plane a man. Natheleſs, if ſhe was to angre me, althoff it is a ſhame to bete a woman; yet I colde make ſhift to throe my hat at her, or ſo, your honner.

But that ſame reſeit, iff your honner ſo pleaſe, to cure a ſhrowiſh wife. It would more encurrege to wed, iff ſo be one know'd it before-hand, as one may ſay. So likewiſe, if one knoed one could *honneſtly*, as your honner ſays, and as of

* See Vol. III. Letter XVII.

the handy-work of God, in one twelve-month.

But, I ſhall grow impartinent to ſuch a grate man.—And *hereafter* may do for that, as ſhe turnes out: for one mought be loth to part with her, mayhap, ſo *verry* ſoon too; eſpeſſially if ſhe was to make the notable lanlady your honner put into my head.

Butt wonce moer, begging your honner's parden, and promiſſing all dilligence and exſackneſſe, I reſte, *your honner's dewtiful ſarvant to command*,

JOSEPH LEMAN.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

THE

HISTORY

OF

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

VOLUME THE THIRD.

LETTER I.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

ST. ALBAN'S, MONDAY NIGHT.

I Snatch a few moments while my beloved is retired [as I hope, to reſt] to perform my promiſe. No purſuit—Nor have I apprehenſions of any; though I muſt make my charmer dread that there will be one.

And now, let me tell thee, that never was joy ſo compleat as mine!—But let me enquire—Is not the angel flown away?

* *

O NO! She is in the next apartment!—Securely mine!—Mine for ever!

O extaſy!—My heart will burſt my breaſt,
To leap into her boſom!

I knew that the whole ſtupid family were in a combination to do my buſineſs for me. I told thee that they were all working for me, like ſo many underground moles; and ſtill more blind than the moles are ſaid to be, unknowing that they did ſo. I myſelf, the director of their principal motions; which falling in with the malice of their little hearts, they took to be all their own.

But did I ſay my joy was perfect?—O no!—It receives ſome abatement from my diſguſted bride. For how can I endure to think, that I owe more to her relations perſecutions, than to her favour for me?—Or even, as far as I know, to her preference of me to another man?

But let me not indulge this thought. Were I to do ſo, it might coſt my charmer dear. Let me rejoice, that ſhe has paſſed the Rubicon; that ſhe cannot return; that, as I have ordered it, the flight will appear to the implacables to be altogether with her own conſent; and that if I doubt her love, I can put her to trials as mortifying to her niceneſs, as glorious to my pride.—For, let me tell thee, dearly as I love her, if I thought there was but the ſhadow of a doubt in her mind, whether ſhe preferred me to any man living, I would ſhew her no mercy.

TUESDAY, DAY-DAWN.

BUT, on the wings of love, I fly to my charmer, who perhaps by this time is riſing to encourage the tardy dawn. I have not ſlept a wink of the hour and half I lay down to invite ſleep. It ſeems to me, that I am not ſo much body, as to require ſuch vulgar renovation.

But why, as in the chariot, as in the inn, at alighting, all heart-burſting grief, my deareſt creature? So perſecuted as thou wert perſecuted!—So much in danger of the moſt abhorred compulſion!—Yet grief ſo *unſuſpectedly* ſincere

ſincere for an eſcape ſo critical!—Take care—Take care, O beloved of my ſoul! for jealous is the heart in which love has erected a temple to thee.

Yet, it muſt be allowed, that ſuch a ſudden tranſition muſt affect her; muſt ice her over. When a little more uſed to her new ſituation; when her hurries are at an end; when ſhe ſees how religiouſly I ſhall obſerve all her INJUNCTIONS; ſhe will undoubtedly have the gratitude to diſtinguiſh between the confinement ſhe has eſcaped from, and the liberty ſhe has reaſon to rejoice in.

She comes! ſhe comes!—And the ſun is juſt riſing to attend her!—Adieu!—Be half as happy as I am, (for all diffidences, like night-fogs before the ſun, diſperſe at her approach) and, next myſelf, thou wilt be the happieſt man in the world.

LETTER II.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12.

I Will purſue my melancholy ſtory. Being thus hurried to the chariot, it would have been to no purpoſe to have refuſed entering into it, had he not in my fright lifted me in, as he did; and it inſtantly drove away a full gallop, and ſtopped not till it brought us to St. Alban's; which was juſt as the day ſhut in.

I thought I ſhould have fainted ſeveral times by the way. With uplifted hands and eyes, 'God protect me!' ſaid I often to myſelf—'Can it be I, 'that am here!'—My eyes running over, and my heart ready to burſt with ſighs as involuntary as my flight.

How different, how inexpreſſibly different, the gay wretch; viſibly triumphing (as I could not but conſtrue his almoſt rapturous joy) in the ſucceſs of his arts! But overflowing with complimental flouriſhes, yet reſpectfully diſtant his addreſs, all the way we *flew*; for that rather than *galloping*, was the motion of the horſes; which took, as I believe, a round-about way, to prevent being traced.

I have reaſon to think, there were other horſemen at his devotion; three or four different perſons, above the rank of ſervants, galloping by us now-and-then on each ſide of the chariot: but he took no notice of them; and I had too much grief, mingled with indignation, notwithſtanding all his blandiſhments, to aſk any queſtions about them, or any-thing elſe.

Think, my dear, what were my thoughts on alighting from the chariot; having no attendant of my own ſex; no cloaths but what I had on, and thoſe little ſuited for ſuch a journey as I had *already* taken, and was *ſtill* to take: neither hood nor hat, nor any-thing but a handkerchief about my neck and ſhoulders. Fatigued to death: my mind ſtill more fatigued than my body; and in ſuch a foam the horſes, that every-one in the inn we put up at gueſſed [They could not do otherwiſe] that I was a young giddy creature, who had run away from her friends. This it was eaſy to ſee, by their whiſpering and gaping; more of the people of the houſe alſo coming in by turns, than were neceſſary for the attendance.

The miſtreſs of the houſe, whom he ſent in to me, ſhewed me another apartment, and, ſeeing me ready to faint, brought me hartſhorn and water; and then, upon my deſiring to be left alone for half an hour, retired: for I found my heart ready to burſt, on revolving every-thing in my thoughts. And the moment ſhe was gone, faſtening the door, I threw myſelf into an old great chair, and gave way to a violent flood of tears; which a little relieved me.

Mr. Lovelace, ſooner than I wiſhed, ſent up the gentlewoman, who preſſed me, in his name, to admit my brother, or to come down to him: for he had told her I was his ſiſter; and that he had brought me, againſt my will, and without warning, from a friend's houſe, where I had been all the winter, in order to prevent my marrying againſt the conſent of my friends; to whom he was now conducting me; and that, having given me no time for a travelling-dreſs, I was greatly offended at him.

So, my dear, your frank, your open-hearted friend, was forced to countenance this tale; which indeed ſuited me the better, becauſe I was unable for ſome time to talk, ſpeak, or look up; and ſo my dejection, and grief, and ſilence, might very well paſs before the

the gentlewoman and her niece who attended me, as a fit of ſullenneſs.

The room I was in being a bed-chamber, I choſe to go down, at his repeated meſſage, attended by the miſtreſs of the houſe, to that in which he was. He approached me with great reſpect, yet not exceeding a brotherly politeneſs, where a brother *is* polite; and, calling me his deareſt ſiſter, aſked after the ſtate of my mind; and hoped I would forgive him; for never brother half ſo well loved a ſiſter, as he me.

A wretch! How naturally did he fall into the character, although I was ſo much out of mine!

Unthinking creatures have ſome comfort in the ſhortneſs of their views; in their unapprehenſiveneſs; and that they penetrate not beyond the preſent moment: in ſhort that they *are* unthinking!—But, for a perſon of my thoughtful diſpoſition, who has been accuſtomed to look forward, as well to the *poſſible*, as to the *probable*, what comfort can I have in my reflections?

But let me give you the particulars of our converſation a little before and after our ſupper-time, joining both in one.

When we were alone, he beſought me (I cannot ſay but with all the tokens of a paſſionate and reſpectful tenderneſs) to be better reconciled to myſelf and to him: he repeated all the vows of honour and inviolable affection that he ever made me: he promiſed to be wholly governed by me in every future ſtep. He aſked me to give him leave to propoſe, whether I choſe to ſet out next day to either of his aunts?

I was ſilent. I knew not what to ſay, nor what to do.

Whether I choſe to have private lodgings procured for me, in either of thoſe ladies neighbourhood, as were once my thoughts?

I was ſtill ſilent.

Whether I choſe to go to either of Lord M.'s ſeats; that of Berks, or that in the county we were in?

In lodgings, I ſaid, any-where, where he was not to be.

He had *promiſed this*, he owned; and he would religiouſly keep to his word, as ſoon as he found all danger of purſuit over; and that I was ſettled to my mind. But, if the place were indifferent to me, London was the ſafeſt, and the moſt private: and his relations ſhould all viſit me there, the moment I thought fit to admit them. His couſin Charlotte particularly, ſhould attend me, as my companion, if I would accept of her, as ſoon as ſhe was able to go abroad. Mean time, would I go to Lady Betty Lawrance's, (Lady Sarah was a melancholy woman?) I ſhould be the moſt welcome gueſt ſhe ever received.

I told him, I wiſhed not to go (immediately, however, and in the frame I was in, and likely not to be out of) to any of his relations: that my reputation was concerned, to have *him* abſent from me; that, if I were in ſome private lodging, the meaner the leſs to be ſuſpected, (as it would be known, that I went away by his means; and he would be ſuppoſed to have provided me handſome accommodations) it would be moſt ſuitable both to my mind and to my ſituation. That this might be beſt, I ſhould think, in the country for *me*; in town for *him*. And no matter how ſoon he was known to be there.

If he might deliver his opinion, he ſaid, it was, that ſince I declined going to any of his relations, London was the only place in the world to be private in. Every new comer in a country-town or village excited a curioſity: a perſon of my figure [And many compliments he made me] would excite more. Even meſſages and letters, where none uſed to be brought, would occaſion enquiry. He had not provided a lodging any-where, ſuppoſing I would chuſe to go either to London, where accommodations of that ſort might be fixed upon in an hour's time, or to Lady Betty's; or to Lord M.'s Hertfordſhire ſeat, where was the houſekeeper, an excellent woman, Mrs. Greme, ſuch another as my Norton.

To be ſure, I ſaid, if I were purſued, it would be in their firſt paſſion; and ſome one of *his* relations houſes would be the place they would expect to find me at—I knew not what to do.

My pleaſure ſhould determine him, he ſaid, be it what it would. Only that I were ſafe, was all he was ſolicitous about. He had lodgings in town; but he did not offer to propoſe them. He knew, I would have more objections to go to them, than I could have to go to Lord M.'s, or to Lady Betty's.

'No doubt of it,' I replied with ſuch an indignation in my manner, as made him

him run over with profeſſions, that he was far from propoſing them, or wiſhing for my acceptance of them. And again he repeated, That my honour and ſafety were all he was ſolicitous about; aſſuring me, that my will ſhould be a law to him in every particular.

I was too peeviſh, and too much afflicted, and indeed too much incenſed againſt him, to take well any-thing he ſaid.

I thought myſelf, I ſaid, extremely unhappy. I knew not what to determine upon: my reputation now, no doubt, utterly ruined. Deſtitute of cloaths; unfit to be ſeen by any-body: my very indigence, as I might call it, proclaiming my folly to every-one who ſaw me; who would ſuppoſe that I had been taken at advantage, or had given an undue one; and had no power over either my will or my actions. That I could not but think I had been dealt artfully with;—that he had ſeemed to have taken, what he might ſuppoſe, the juſt meaſure of my weakneſs, founded on my youth and inexperience: that I could not forgive myſelf for meeting him; that my heart bled for the diſtreſſes of my father and mother, on this occaſion; that I would give the world, and all my hopes in it, to have been ſtill in my father's houſe, whatever had been my uſage; that, let him proteſt and vow what he would, I ſaw ſomething low and ſelfiſh in his love, that he could ſtudy to put a young creature upon making ſuch a ſacrifice of her duty and conſcience; when a perſon, actuated by a generous love, muſt ſeek to oblige the object of it, in every-thing eſſential to her honour, and to her peace of mind.

He was very attentive to all I ſaid; never offering to interrupt me once. His anſwer to every article, almoſt methodically, ſhewed his memory.

What I had ſaid, he told me, had made him very grave; and he would anſwer accordingly.

He was grieved at his heart, to find that he had ſo little ſhare in my favour or confidence.

As to my *reputation*; (he muſt be very ſincere with me) that could not ſuffer half ſo much by the ſtep I ſo greatly regretted to have taken, as by the confinement, and equally fooliſh and unjuſt treatment, I had met with from my relations: that every mouth was full of blame of them, of my brother and ſiſter particularly; and of wonder at my patience; that he muſt repeat what he had written to me he believed more than once, that my friends themſelves expected, that I ſhould take a proper opportunity to free myſelf from their perſecutions; why elſe did they confine me? That my exalted character, as he called it, would ſtill bear me out, with thoſe who knew *me*; who knew my *brother's* and *ſiſter's* motives; and who knew the wretch they were for compelling me to have.

With regard to *cloaths*; who, as matters were circumſtanced, could expect that I ſhould be able to bring away any others than thoſe I had on at the time? For *preſent* uſe or wear, all the ladies of his family would take a pride to ſupply me: for *future*, the product of the beſt looms, not only in England, but throughout the world, were at my command.

If I wanted *money*, as no doubt I muſt, he ſhould be proud to ſupply me: would to Heaven, he might preſume to hope, there were but one intereſt between us!

And then he would fain have had me to accept of a Bank note of an hundred pounds; which, unawares to me, he put into my hand: but which, you may be ſure, I refuſed with warmth.

He was inexpreſſibly grieved and ſurprized, he ſaid, to hear me ſay he had acted *artfully* by me. He came provided, according to my *confirmed* appointment, [*A wretch to upbraid me thus!*] to redeem me from my perſecutors; and little expected a change of ſentiment, and that he ſhould have ſo much difficulty to prevail upon me, as he had met with: that perhaps I might think his offer to go *into the garden with me*, and to face my aſſembled relations, was a piece of *art only*; but that if I did, I wronged him: ſince to this hour, ſeeing my exceſſive uneaſineſs, he wiſhed with all his ſoul he had been permitted to accompany me in. It was always his maxim to brave a threatened danger. Threateners, where they have an opportunity to put in force their threats, were ſeldom to be feared. But had he been aſſured of a private ſtab, or of as many death's wounds as there were perſons in my family, (made

deſperate

desperate as he should have been by my return) he would have attended me into the house.

So, my dear, what I have to do, is to hold myself inexcusable for meeting such a determined and audacious spirit; that's all! I have hardly any question now, but that he would have contrived some wicked stratagem or other to have got me away, had I met him at a midnight hour, as once or twice I had thoughts to do; and that would have been more terrible still.

He concluded this part of his talk, with saying, That he doubted not, but that had he attended me in, he should have come off in every-one's opinion so well, that he should have had general leave to renew his visits.

He went on—He must be so bold as to tell me, that he should have paid a visit of this kind (but indeed accompanied by several of his trusty friends) had I *not* met him; and that very afternoon too; for he could not tamely let the dreadful Wednesday come, without making some effort to change their determinations.

What, my dear, was to be done with such a man!

That therefore for my sake, as well as for his own, he had reason to wish that a disease so desperate had been attempted to be overcome by as desperate a remedy. 'We all know,' said he, 'that great ends are sometimes brought 'about by the very means by which 'they are endeavoured to be frustrated.'

'My present situation, I am sure,' thought I, 'affords a sad evidence of 'this truth!'

I was silent all this time. My blame was indeed turned inward. Sometimes, too, I was half-frighted at his audaciousness: at others, had the less inclination to interrupt him, being excessively fatigued, and my spirits sunk to nothing, with the view even of the best prospects with such a man.

This gave him opportunity to proceed: and that he did; assuming a still more serious air.

As to what further remained for him to say, in answer to what I had said, he hoped I would pardon him; but, upon his soul, he was concerned, infinitely concerned, he repeated, (his colour and his voice rising) that it was *necessary* for him to observe, how much I chose rather to have run the risque of being Solmes's wife, than to have it in my power to reward a man who, I must forgive him, had been as much insulted on *my* account, as *I* had been on *his*—who had watched my commands, 'And (pardon me, Madam) every '*changeable* motion of your pen, all 'hours, in all weathers, and with a 'chearfulness and ardour, that nothing 'but the most faithful and obsequious 'passion could inspire.'

I now, my dear, began to revive into a little more warmth of attention.

'And all, Madam, for what?'—How I stared! for he stopt then a moment or two—'*Only*,' went he on, 'to 'prevail upon you to free yourself 'from ungenerous and base oppres-'sion—'

'Sir, Sir!' indignantly said I.

'Hear me but out, dearest Madam! '—My heart is full—I *must* speak 'what I have to say—To be told (for 'your words are yet in my ears, and at 'my heart!) that you would give the 'world, *and all your hopes in it*, to 'have been still in your cruel and 'gloomy father's house—'

'Not a word, Sir, against my father! '—I will not bear that.'

'*Whatever had been your usage*:—'and you have a credulity, Madam, 'against all probability, if you be-'lieve you should have avoided being 'Solmes's wife. That I have put 'you upon *sacrificing your duty and* 'conscience—Yet, dearest creature! see 'you not the contradiction that your 'warmth of temper has surprized you 'into, when the reluctance you shewed 'to the last to leave your persecutors, 'has cleared your conscience from the 'least reproach of this sort?'

'O Sir! Sir! are you so critical 'then? Are you so light in your an-'ger, as to dwell upon words?'

Indeed, my dear, I have since thought, that his anger was not owing to that sudden *impetus*, which cannot be easily bridled; but rather was a sort of *manageable* anger, let loose to intimidate me.

'Forgive me, Madam—I have just 'done—Have I not, in your own opi-'nion, hazarded my life to redeem you 'from oppression?—Yet is not my re-'ward, after all, precarious?—For, 'Madam, *have you not conditioned* 'with me, (and, hard as the condition 'is, *most sacredly will I observe it*) 'that all my hope must be remote? That

'you are determined to have it in your 'power *to favour or reject me totally*, 'as you please?'

See, my dear! in every respect my condition changed for the worse! Is it in *my power* to take your advice, if I should think it ever so right to take it*?

'And have you not furthermore declared,' proceeded he, '*that you will engage to renounce me for ever, if your friends insist upon that cruel renunciation, as the terms of being reconciled to you?*

'But nevertheless, Madam, all the merit of having saved you from an odious compulsion, shall be mine. I glory in it, though I were to lose you for ever.—*As I see I am but too likely to do*, from your present displeasure; and especially, *if your friends insist upon the terms you are ready to comply with.*

'That you are *your own mistress*, through *my* means, is, I repeat, my boast. *As such*, I humbly implore your favour—And *that only upon the conditions I have yielded to hope for it.*—As I do now *thus humbly*' [the proud wretch falling on one knee] 'your forgiveness, for so long detaining your ear, and for all the plain-dealing that my undesigning heart would not be denied to utter by my lips.'

'O Sir, pray rise!—Let the obliged kneel, if one of us must kneel!—But nevertheless, proceed not in this strain, I *beseech* you. You have had a great *deal* of trouble about me: but had you let me know *in time*, that you expected to be rewarded for it at the price of my duty, I should have spared you much of it.

'Far be it from me, Sir, to depreciate merit so *extraordinary*. But let me say, that had it not been for the forbidden correspondence I was teazed by you into; and which I had not continued (every letter, for many letters, intended to be the last) but because I thought you a sufferer from my friends; I had not been either confined or ill-treated: nor would my brother's low-meant violence have had a foundation to work upon.

'I am far from thinking my case would have been so very desperate as you imagine, had I staid. My father loved me in his heart: he would not see me before; and I wanted *only* to *see* him, and to be *heard*; and a *delay of his sentence* was the least thing I expected from the trial I was to stand.

'You are boasting of your merits, Sir: let merit *be* your boast; nothing else can attract me. If *personal* considerations had principal weight with me, either in Solmes's disfavour, or in your favour, I should despise *myself*: if you value yourself upon them, in preference to the *person* of the poor Solmes, I shall despise *you!*

'You may glory in your fancied merits in getting me away: but the cause of *your* glory, I tell you plainly, is *my* shame.

'Make to yourself a title to my regard, which I can better approve of; or else you will not have so much merit with *me*, as you have with *yourself*.

'But here, Sir, like the first pair, (I, at least, driven out of my paradise) are we recriminating. No more shall you need to tell me of your *sufferings*, and your *merits!*—your *all hours*, and *all weathers!* for I will bear them in memory as long as I live; and if it be impossible for me to *reward* them, be ever ready to *own* the obligation. All that I desire of you now, is, to leave it to myself to seek for some private abode: to take the chariot with you to London, or elsewhere. And, if I have

* Clarissa has been censured as behaving to Mr. Lovelace, in their first conversation at St. Alban's, and afterwards, with too much reserve, and even with haughtiness. Surely those who have thought her to blame on this account, have not paid a due attention to the story. How early, as above, and in what immediately follows, does he remind her of the terms of distance which she prescribed to him, before she was in his power, *in hopes to have the door open for a reconciliation with her friends*, which her heart was set upon? And how artfully does he (unrequired) promise to observe the conditions which she in her present circumstances and situation (in pursuance of Miss Howe's advice) would gladly have dispensed with?—To say nothing of the resentment which she was under a *necessity* to shew, at the manner of his getting her away, in order to justify to him *the sincerity of her refusal to go off with him*. See, in her subsequent Letter to Miss Howe, N° V. her own sense upon this subject.

'any

'any further occasion for your assist-
'ance and protection, I will signify it
'to you, and be still *further* obliged to
'you.'

'You are warm, my dearest life!—
'But indeed there is no occasion for it.
'Had I any views unworthy of my
'faithful love for you, I should not
'have been so honest in my declara-
'tions.'

Then he began again to vow the sincerity of his intentions.

But I took him up short. 'I am
'willing to *believe* you, Sir. It would
'be insupportable but to suppose there
'were a *necessity* for such solemn de-
'clarations.' [At this he seemed to collect himself, as I may say, into a little more circumspection.] 'If I
'thought there *were*, I would not sit
'with you here, in a publick inn, I
'assure you, although cheated hither,
'as far as I know, by methods (You
'must excuse me, Sir) which but to
'*suspect*, will hardly let me have pa-
'tience either with you or with myself.
'—But no more of this, just now:
'let me, I beseech you, *good Sir*,'
bowing, [I was very angry!] 'let me
'only know whether you intend to
'leave me; or whether I have only
'escaped from one confinement to
'another?'

'*Cheated hither, as far as I know*,
'Madam! Let you *know* (and with
'that air too, charming, though
'grievous to my heart!) *if you have*
'*only escaped from one confinement to*
'*another*—Amazing! perfectly amaz-
'ing! And can there be a necessity for
'me to answer this? You are abso-
'lutely your own mistress.—It were
'very strange, if you were not. *The*
'*moment you are in a place of safety*, I
'will leave you. To one condition
'only, give me leave to beg your con-
'sent: it is this; that you will be
'pleased, now you are so entirely in
'your own power, to renew a promise
'*voluntarily* made before; *voluntarily*,
'or I would not *now* presume to re-
'quest it; for although I would not be
'thought capable of growing upon
'concession, yet I cannot bear to think
'of losing the ground your goodness
'had given me room to hope I had
'gained; that, make up how you
'please with your relations, you will
'never marry any other man, while I
'am living and single, unless I should
'be so wicked as to give new cause for
'high displeasure.'

'I hesitate not to confirm this pro-
'mise, Sir, upon your *own* condition.
'In what manner do you expect me to
'confirm it?'

'Only, Madam, by your word.'

'Then I never will.'

He had the assurance (*I was now in his power*) to salute me as a sealing of my promise, as he called it. His motion was so sudden, that I was not aware of it. It would have looked *affected* to be very angry; yet I could not be pleased, considering this as a *leading freedom*, from a spirit so audacious and encroaching: and he might see, that I was not.

He passed all that by with an air peculiar to himself—'Enough, enough,
'dearest Madam! And now let me beg
'of you but to conquer this dreadful
'uneasiness, which gives me to appre-
'hend too much for my jealous love to
'bear; and it shall be my whole en-
'deavour to deserve your favour, and
'to make you the happiest woman in
'the world; as I shall be the happiest
'of men.'

I broke from him to write to you my preceding letter; but refused to send it by his servant, as I told you. The mistress of the house helped me to a messenger, who was to carry what you should give him to Lord M.'s seat in Hertfordshire, directed for Mrs. Greme, the housekeeper there. And early in the morning, for fear of pursuit, we were to set out that way: and there he proposed to exchange the chariot-and-six for a chaise-and-pair of his own, which he had at that seat, as it would be a less-noticed conveyance.

I looked over my little stock of money; and found it to be no more than seven guineas and some silver: the rest of my stock was but fifty guineas, and that five more than I thought it was, when my sister challenged me as to the sum I had by me*; and those I left in my escritoire, little intending to go away with him.

Indeed my case abounds with a shocking number of indelicate circumstances. Among the rest, I was forced to account to *him*, who knew I could have no cloaths but what I had on, how I came

* See Vol. I. Letter XLII.

to have linen with you, (for he could not but know I sent for it;) lest he should imagine I had an early design to go away with him, and made that a *part of the preparation*.

He most heartily wished, he said, for my mind's sake, that your mother would have afforded me her protection; and delivered himself upon this subject with equal *freedom* and concern.

There are, my dear Miss Howe, a multitude of punctilios and decorums; which a young creature must dispense with, who, in a situation like mine, makes a man the intimate attendant of her person. I could now, I think, give twenty reasons stronger than any I have heretofore mentioned, why women of the *least delicacy* should never think of incurring the danger and disgrace of taking the step I have been drawn in to take, but with horror and aversion; and why they should look upon the man who shall tempt them to it, as the vilest and most selfish of seducers.

* *

BEFORE five o'clock (Tuesday morning) the maid came up to tell me my *brother* was ready, and that breakfast also waited for me in the parlour. I went down with a heart as heavy as my eyes, and received great acknowledgments and compliments from him on being so soon dressed, and ready (as he interpreted it) to continue our journey.

He had the thought which I had not (for what had I to do with thinking, who had it not when I stood most in need of it?) to purchase for me a velvet hood, and a short cloak, trimmed with silver, without saying any-thing to me. He must reward himself, the artful encroacher said, before the landlady and her maids and niece, for his forethought; and would salute his pretty sullen sister! —He took his reward; and, as he said, a tear with it. While he assured me, still before them, [a vile wretch!] that I had nothing to fear from meeting with parents who so dearly loved me.

How could I be complaisant, my dear, to such a man as this?

When we had got into the chariot, and it began to move, he asked me, Whether I had any objection to go to Lord M.'s Hertfordshire seat? His lordship, he said, was at his Berkshire one.

I told him, I chose not to go, *as yet*, to any of his relations; for that would indicate a plain defiance to my own. My choice was, to go to a private lodging, and for him to be at a distance from me: at least till I heard how things were taken by my friends—For that although I had but little hopes of a reconciliation as it *was*; yet if they knew I was in his protection, or in that of any of his friends, (which would be looked upon as the same thing) there would not be room for any hopes at all.

I should govern him as I pleased, he solemnly assured me, in every thing. But he still thought *London* was the best place for me; and if I were once safe there, and in a lodging to my liking, he would go to M. Hall. But, as I approved not of London, he would urge it no further.

He proposed, and I consented, to put up at an inn in the neighbourhood of *the Lawn*, (as he called Lord M.'s seat in this county) since I chose not to go thither. And here I got two hours to myself; which I told him I should pass in writing another letter to you, (meaning my narrative, which, though greatly fatigued, I had begun at St. Alban's) and in one to my sister, to apprize the family (whether they were solicitous about it or not) that I was well; and to beg that my cloaths, some particular books, and the fifty guineas I had left in my escritoire, might be sent me.

He asked, if I had considered whither to have them directed?

Indeed, not I, I told him: I was a stranger to—

So was he, he interrupted me; but it struck him by chance.

Wicked story-teller!

'But,' added he, 'I will tell you, 'Madam, how it shall be managed— 'If you don't chuse to go to London, 'it is, nevertheless, best, that your re- 'lations should *think* you there; for 'then they will absolutely despair of 'finding you. If you write, be pleased 'to direct, to be left for you, at Mr. 'Osgood's, near Soho Square. Mr. 'Osgood is a man of reputation: and 'this will effectually amuse them.'

Amuse them, my dear!—Amuse whom?—My father!—my uncles!— But it must be so!——*All his expedients ready, you see!*

I had no objection to this: and I have written accordingly. But what answer

anſwer I ſhall have, or whether any, that is what gives me no ſmall anxiety.

This, however, is one conſolation, that if I have an anſwer, and although my brother ſhould be the writer, it cannot be more ſevere than the treatment I have of late received from him and my ſiſter.

Mr. Lovelace ſtaid out about an hour and half; and then came in, impatiently ſending up to me no leſs than four times, to deſire admittance. But I ſent him word as often, that I was buſy; and at laſt, that I ſhould be ſo, till dinner were ready. He then haſtened that, as I heard him now-and-then, with a hearty curſe upon the cook and waiters.

This is another of his imperfections. I ventured afterwards to check him for his free words, as we ſat at dinner.

Having heard him ſwear at his ſervant, when below, whom, nevertheleſs, he owns to be a good one; 'It is 'a ſad life,' ſaid I, 'theſe innkeepers 'live, Mr. Lovelace.'

'No; pretty well, I believe—But 'why, Madam, think you, that fellows, who eat and drink at other 'mens coſt, or they are ſorry innkeepers, ſhould be entitled to pity?'

'Becauſe of the ſoldiers they are 'obliged to quarter; who are generally, 'I believe, wretched profligates.—'Bleſs me!' ſaid I, 'how I heard one 'of them ſwear and curſe, juſt now, 'at a modeſt meek man, as I judge by 'his low voice, and gentle anſwers!—'Well do they make it a proverb—'*Like a trooper!*'

He bit his lip; aroſe; turned upon his heel; ſtept to the glaſs; and looking *confidently* abaſhed, if I may ſo ſay, 'Aye, Madam,' ſaid he, 'theſe troop-'ers are ſad ſwearing fellows. I think 'their officers ſhould chaſtiſe them for 'it.'

'I am ſure they deſerve chaſtiſement,' replied I: 'for ſwearing is a moſt *un-'manly* vice, and curſing as *poor* and '*low* a one; ſince they proclaim the 'profligate's want of power, and his 'wickedneſs at the ſame time; for, 'could ſuch a one *puniſh* as he *ſpeaks*, 'he would be a fiend!'

'Charmingly obſerved, by my ſoul, 'Madam!—The next trooper I hear 'ſwear and curſe, I'll tell him what 'an *unmanly*, and what a *poor* wretch 'he is.'

Mrs. Greme came to pay her *duty* to me, as Mr. Lovelace called it; and was very urgent with me to go to her lord's houſe; letting me know what handſome things ſhe had heard her lord, and his two nieces, and all the family, ſay of me; and what wiſhes for ſeveral months paſt they had put up for the honour ſhe now hoped would ſoon be done them all.

This gave me ſome ſatisfaction, as it confirmed from the mouth of a very good ſort of woman all that Mr. Lovelace had told me.

Upon enquiry about a private lodging, ſhe recommended me to a ſiſter-in-law of hers, eight miles from thence —Where I now am. And what pleaſed me the better, was, that Mr. Lovelace (of whom I could ſee ſhe was infinitely obſervant) obliged her, of his own motion, to accompany me in the chaiſe; himſelf riding on horſeback, with his two ſervants, and one of Lord M.'s. And here we arrived about four o'clock.

But, as I told you, in my former, the lodgings are inconvenient. Mr. Lovelace indeed found great fault with them: and told Mrs. Greme (who had ſaid, that they were not worthy of us) that they came not up even to her account of them. As the houſe was a mile from a town, it was not proper for him, he ſaid, to be ſo far diſtant from me, leſt any thing ſhould happen: and yet the apartments were not ſeparate and diſtinct enough for me to like them, he was ſure.

This muſt be agreeable enough from him, you will believe.

Mrs. Greme and I had a good deal of talk in the chaiſe about him: ſhe was very eaſy and free in her anſwers to all I aſked; and has, I find, a very ſerious turn.

I led her on to ſay to the following effect; ſome part of it not unlike what Lord M.'s diſmiſſed bailiff had ſaid before; by which I find that all the ſervants have a like opinion of him.

That Mr. Lovelace was a generous man; that it was hard to ſay, whether the ſervants of her lord's family loved or feared him moſt; that her lord had a very great affection for him; that his two noble aunts were not leſs fond of him; that his couſins Montague were as good-natured young ladies *as ever lived*; that Lord M. and Lady Sarah and Lady Betty had propoſed ſeveral ladies

ladies to him, before he made his addreſſes to me, and even ſince, deſpairing to move me and my friends in his favour—But that he had no thoughts of marrying at all, ſhe had heard him ſay, if it were not to me; that as well her lord as the two ladies his ſiſters were a good deal concerned at the ill-uſage he received from my family; but admired my character, and wiſhed to have him married to me (although I were not to have a ſhilling) in preference to any other perſon, from the opinion that they had of the influence I ſhould have over him. That, to be ſure, Mr. Lovelace was a wild gentleman; but wildneſs was a diſtemper which would cure itſelf. That her lord delighted in his company, whenever he could get it: but that they often fell out; and his lordſhip was always forced to ſubmit—Indeed, was half-afraid of him, ſhe believed; for Mr. Lovelace would do as he pleaſed. She mingled a thouſand pities often, that he acted not up to the talents lent him—Yet would have it, that he had fine qualities to found a reformation upon; and, when the happy day came, would make amends for all: and of this all his friends were ſo aſſured, that they wiſhed for nothing ſo earneſtly, as for his marriage.

This, indifferent as it is, is better than my brother ſays of him.

The people of the houſe here are very honeſt-looking induſtrious folks: Mrs. Sorlings is the gentlewoman's name. The farm ſeems well-ſtocked, and thriving. She is a widow; has two ſons, men grown, who vie with each other which ſhall take moſt pains in promoting the common good; and they are both of them, I already ſee, more reſpectful to two modeſt young women their ſiſters, than my brother was to his ſiſter.

I believe I muſt ſtay here longer than at firſt I thought I ſhould.

I ought to have mentioned, that, before I ſet out for this place, I received you kind letter *. Every thing is kind from ſo dear a friend.

I own, that after I had told you of my abſolute determination not to go away with him, you might well be ſurprized at your firſt hearing that I was actually gone. The Lord bleſs me, my dear, I myſelf, at times, can hardly believe it is I, that have been led to take ſo ſtrange a ſtep.

I have not the better opinion of Mr. Lovelace for his extravagant volubility. He is too full of profeſſions. He ſays too many fine things *of* me, and *to* me. True reſpect, true value, I think lies not in words: words *cannot* expreſs it: the ſilent awe, the humble, the doubting eye, and even the heſitating voice, better ſhew it by much, than, as our beloved Shakeſpeare ſays—

——— 'The rattling tongue
'Of ſaucy and audacious eloquence.'

The man indeed at times is all upon the *extatick*, one of his phraſes. But, to my ſhame and confuſion, I muſt ſay, that I know too well to what to attribute his tranſports. In one word, it is to his *triumph*, my dear. And, to impute it to *that* perhaps equally expoſes my vanity, and condemns my folly.

We have been alarmed with notions of a purſuit, founded upon a letter from his intelligencer.

How do different circumſtances either ſanctify or condemn the ſame action! —What care ought we to take not to confound the diſtinctions of right and wrong, when *ſelf* comes in the queſtion!—I condemned in Mr. Lovelace the corrupting of a ſervant of my father's; and now I am glad to give a kind of *indirect* approbation of that fault, by enquiring of him what he hears, by that or any other way, of the manner in which my relations took my flight. A preconcerted, forward, and artful flight, it muſt undoubtedly appear to them. How grievous is that to think of! Yet *how*, as I am *ſituated*, can I put them right?

Moſt heavily, he ſays, they take it; but ſhew not ſo much grief as rage. And he can hardly have patience to hear of the virulence and menaces of my brother againſt himſelf. Then a merit is made to me of his forbearance.

What a ſatisfaction am I robbed of, my deareſt friend, when I reflect upon my inconſiderateneſs! O that I had it ſtill in my power to ſay I *ſuffered* wrong, rather than *did* wrong! That others were more wanting in their kindneſs to me than I in duty (where duty is owing) to them.

* See Vol. II. Letter XLVI.

Fie

Fie upon me! for *meeting the seducer!* —Let all end as happily as it now may, I have laid up for myself *remorse for my whole life.*

What still more concerns me is, that every time I see this man, I am still at a greater loss than before what to make of him. I watch every turn of his countenance: and I think I see very deep lines in it. He looks with more meaning, I verily think, than he used to look; yet not more serious; not less gay—I don't know how he looks—But with more confidence a great deal than formerly; and yet he never wanted that.

But here is the thing; I behold him with *fear* now, as conscious of the power my indiscretion has given him over me. And well may *he* look more elate, when he sees me deprived of all the self-supposed significance, which adorns and exalts a person who has been accustomed to respect; and who now, by a *conscious inferiority*, allows herself *to be overcome*, and in a state of *obligation*, as I may say, to a man who from a humble suitor to her for her favour, assumes the consequence and airs of a protector.

I shall send this, as my former, by a poor man, who travels every day with pedlary matters. He will leave it at Mrs. Knolly's, as you direct.

If you hear any-thing of my father and mother, and of their health, and how my friends were affected by my unhappy step, pray be so good as to write me a few lines by the messenger, if his waiting for them can be known to you.

I am afraid to ask you, whether, upon reading that part of my narrative already in your hands, you think any sort of extenuation lies for *your unhappy*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LETTER III.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

TUESDAY, WEDN. APRIL 11, 12.

YOU claim my promise, that I will be as particular as possible, in all that passes between me and my goddess. Indeed, I never had a more illustrious subject to exercise my pen upon. And, moreover, I have leisure; for by her good will, my access would be as difficult to her, as that of the humblest slave to an eastern monarch. Nothing, then, but inclination to write can be wanting: and since our friendship, and your obliging attendance upon me at the White Hart, will not excuse that, I will endeavour to keep my word.

I parted with thee and thy brethren, with a full resolution, thou knowest, to rejoin ye, if she once again disappointed me, in order to go together (attended by our servants, for shew-sake) to the gloomy father; and demand audience of the tyrant upon the freedoms taken with my character. In short, to have tried by fair means, if fair would do, to make him change his resolutions; and treat his charming *daughter* with less inhumanity, and *me* with more civility.

I told thee my reasons for not going in search of a letter of countermand. I was right; for if I had, I should have found such a one; and had I received it, she would not have met me. Did she think, that after I had been more than once disappointed, I would not keep her to her promise; that I would not hold her to it, when I had got her in so deeply?

The moment I heard the door unbolt, I was sure of her. That motion made my heart bound to my throat. But when that was followed with the presence of my charmer, flashing upon me all at once in a flood of brightness, sweetly dressed, though all unprepared for a journey, I trod air, and hardly thought myself a mortal.

Thou shalt judge of her dress, as, at the moment I first beheld her, she appeared to me, and as, upon a nearer observation, she really was. I am a critick, thou knowest, in womens dresses. Many a one I have taught to dress, and helped to undress. But there is such a native elegance in this lady, that she surpasses all that I could imagine surpassing. But then her person adorns what she wears, more than dress can adorn her; and that's her excellence.

Expect therefore a faint sketch of her admirable person with her dress.

Her wax-like flesh (for after all, flesh and blood I think she is) by it's delicacy and firmness, answers for the soundness

ſoundneſs of her health. Thou haſt often heard me launch out in praiſe of her complexion. I never in my life beheld a ſkin ſo *illuſtriouſly* fair. The lily and the driven ſnow it is nonſenſe to talk of: her lawn and her laces one might indeed compare to thoſe: but what a whited wall would a woman appear to be, who had a complexion which would juſtify ſuch unnatural compariſons? But this lady is all glowing, all charming fleſh and blood: yet ſo clear, that every meandring vein is to be ſeen in all the lovely parts of her which cuſtom permits to be viſible.

Thou haſt heard me alſo deſcribe the wavy ringlets of her ſhining hair needing neither art nor powder; of itſelf an ornament, defying all other ornaments; wantoning in and about a neck that is beautiful beyond deſcription.

Her head-dreſs was a Bruſſels-lace mob, peculiarly adapted to the charming air and turn of her features. A ſky-blue ribband illuſtrated that. But although the weather was ſomewhat ſharp, ſhe had not on either hat or hood; for, beſides that ſhe loves to uſe herſelf hardily, (by which means and by a temperance truly exemplary, ſhe is allowed to have given high health and vigour to an originally tender conſtitution) ſhe ſeems to have intended to ſhew me, that ſhe was determined not ſtand to her appointment. O Jack! that ſuch a ſweet girl ſhould be a rogue!

Her morning gown was a pale primroſe-coloured paduaſoy: the cuffs and robings curiouſly embroidered by the fingers of this ever-charming Arachne, in a running pattern of violets and their leaves; the light in the flowers ſilver; gold in the leaves. A pair of diamond ſnaps in her ears. A white handkerchief wrought by the ſame inimitable fingers concealed—O Belford! what ſtill more inimitable beauties did it not conceal!—And I ſaw, all the way we rode, the bounding heart (by it's throbbing motions I ſaw it!) dancing beneath the charming umbrage.

Her ruffles were the ſame as her mob. Her apron a flowered lawn. Her coat white ſattin, quilted: blue ſattin her ſhoes, braided with the ſame colour, without lace; for what need has the prettieſt foot in the world of ornament? neat buckles in them: and on her charming arms a pair of black velvet glove-like muffs of her own invention; for ſhe makes and gives faſhions as ſhe pleaſes.—Her hands velvet of themſelves, thus uncovered the freer to be graſped by thoſe of her adorer.

I have told thee what were *my* tranſports, when the undrawn bolt preſented to me my long-expected goddeſs.—*Her* emotions were more ſweetly feminine, after the firſt moments; for then the fire of her ſtarry eyes began to ſink into a leſs dazzling languor. She trembled: nor knew ſhe how to ſupport the agitations of a heart ſhe had never found ſo ungovernable. She was even fainting, when I claſped her in my ſupporting arms. What a precious moment that! How near, how ſweetly near, the throbbing partners!

By her dreſs, I ſaw, as I obſerved before, how unprepared ſhe was for a journey; and not doubting her intention once more to diſappoint me, I would have drawn her after me. Then began a contention the moſt vehement that ever I had with woman. It would pain thy friendly heart to be told the infinite trouble I had with her. I begged, I prayed, on my knees; yet in vain, I begged and prayed her to anſwer her own appointment: and had I not happily provided for ſuch a ſtruggle, knowing whom I had to deal with, I had certainly failed in my deſign; and as certainly would have accompanied her in, without thee and thy brethren: and who knows what might have been the conſequence?

But my honeſt agent anſwering my ſignal, *though not quite ſo ſoon as I expected*, in the manner thou knoweſt I had preſcribed, 'They are coming! 'They are coming!—Fly, fly, my be-'loved creature,' cried I, drawing my ſword with a flouriſh, as if I would have ſlain half an hundred of the ſuppoſed intruders; and, ſeizing her trembling hands, I drew her after me ſo ſwiftly, that *my* feet, winged by love, could hardly keep pace with *her* feet, agitated by fear.—And ſo I became her emperor.

I'll tell thee all, when I ſee thee: and thou ſhalt then judge of *my* difficulties, and of *her* perverſeneſs. And thou wilt rejoice with me at my conqueſt over ſuch a watchful and open-eyed charmer.

But ſeeſt thou not now (as I think I do) the wind-outſtripping fair-one flying *from* her love *to* her love?—Is there not

not such a game?—Nay, flying from friends she was resolved not to abandon, to the man she was determined not to go off with?—*The sex! The sex, all over!*—Charming contradiction!—Hah, hah, hah, hah!—I must here—I must here, lay down my pen, to hold my sides; for I must have my laugh out now the fit is upon me.

* *

I BELIEVE—I believe—Hah, hah, hah! I believe, Jack, my dogs conclude me mad: for here has one of them popt in, as if to see what ailed me; or whom I had with me. The whorson caught the laugh, as he went out.—Hah, hah, hah!—An *impudent* dog!—O Jack, knewest thou my conceit, and were but thy laugh joined to mine, I believe it would hold me for an hour longer.

But, O my best beloved fair-one, repine not thou at the arts by which thou suspectest thy fruitless vigilance has been over-watched.—Take care, that thou provokest not new ones that may be still more worthy of thee. If once thy emperor decrees thy fall, thou shalt greatly fall. Thou shalt have cause, if that come to pass, which *may* come to pass, (for why wouldst thou put off marriage to so long a day, as till thou hadst reason to be convinced of my reformation, dearest?) thou shalt have cause, never fear, to sit down more dissatisfied with the stars, than with thyself. And come the worst to the worst, glorious terms will I give thee. Thy garrison, with General *Prudence* at the head, and Governor *Watchfulness* bringing up the rear, shall be allowed to march out with all the honours due to so brave a resistance. And all thy sex, and all mine, that hear of my stratagems, and of thy conduct, shall acknowledge the fortress as nobly won, as defended.

'Thou wilt not dare,' methinks I hear thee say, 'to attempt to reduce 'such a goddess this, to a standard un-'worthy of her excellences. It is im-'possible, Lovelace, that thou shouldst 'intend to break through oaths and 'protestations so solemn.'

That I did *not* intend it, is certain. That I *do* intend it, I cannot (my heart, my reverence for her, will not let me) say. But knowest thou not my aversion to the state of shackles?—And is she not IN MY POWER?

'And wilt thou, Lovelace, abuse 'that power which—'

Which what, Belford?—Which I obtained not by her own consent, but *against* it.

'But which thou never hadst ob-'tained, had she not esteemed thee 'above all men.'

And which I had never taken so much pains to obtain, had I not loved her above all women. So far upon a par, Jack! and if thou pleadest honour, ought not honour to be mutual? If mutual, does it not imply mutual trust, mutual confidence? And what have I had of *that* from her to boast of?—Thou knowest the whole progress of our warfare: for a warfare it has truly been; and far, very far, from an amorous warfare too. Doubts, mistrusts, upbraidings, on her part: humiliations the most abject, on mine. Obliged to assume such airs of reformation, that every valet of ye has been afraid I should reclaim in good earnest. And hast thou not thyself frequently observed to me, how awkwardly I returned to my usual gaiety, after I had been within a mile of her father's garden-wall, although I had not seen her?

Does she not deserve to pay for all this?—To make an honest fellow look like an hypocrite; what a vile thing is that!

Then thou knowest what a *false* little rogue she has been. How little conscience she has made of disappointing me. Hast thou not been a witness of my ravings, on this score?—Have I not, in the height of them, vowed revenge upon the faithless charmer?—And, if I *must* be forsworn, whether I answer her expectations, or follow my own inclinations; and if the option be in my own power; can I hesitate a moment which to chuse?

Then, I fancy by her circumspection, and her continual grief, that she *expects* some mischief from me. I don't care to disappoint any-body I have a value for.

But O the noble, the exalted creature! Who can avoid hesitating when he thinks of an offence against her? Who can but pity—

Yet, on the other hand, so loth at last to venture, though threatened to be forced into the nuptial fetters with a man, whom to look upon as a rival,

is to disgrace myself!—So sullen, now she has ventured!—What title has she to pity; and to a pity which her pride would make her disclaim?

But I resolve not *any way*. I will see how *her* will works; and how *my* will leads me on. I will give the combatants fair play, and yet, every time I attend her, I find that she is less in *my* power; I more in *hers*.

Yet, a foolish little rogue! to forbid me to think of marriage till I am a reformed man! Till the implacables of her family change their natures, and become placable!

It is true, when she was for making those conditions, she did not think, that without *any*, she should *be cheated out of herself*; for so the dear soul, as I may tell thee in it's place, phrases it.

How it swells my pride, to have been able to outwit such a vigilant charmer! I am taller by half a yard in my imagination than I was. I look *down* upon every-body now. Last night I was still more extravagant. I took off my hat, as I walked, to see if the lace were not scorched, supposing it had brushed down a star; and, before I put it on again, in mere wantonness, and heart's ease, I was for buffeting the moon.

In short, my whole soul is joy. When I go to bed I laugh myself asleep: and I awake either laughing or singing —Yet nothing nearly in view, neither —For why?—*I am not yet reformed enough*.

I told thee at the time, if thou remembrest, how capable this restriction was of being turned upon the over-scrupulous dear creature, could I once get her out of her father's house; and were I disposed to punish her for her family's faults, and for the infinite trouble she herself had given me. Little thinks she, *that I have kept an account of both*: and that, when my heart is soft, and all her own, I can but turn to my *memoranda*, and harden myself at once.

O my charmer, look to it! Abate of thy haughty airs! Value not thyself upon thy sincerity, if thou *art* indifferent to me! I will not bear it *now*. *Art thou not in my* POWER?—Nor, if thou lovest me, think, that the female affectation of denying thy love, will avail thee *now*, with a heart so proud and so jealous as mine?—Remember, moreover, that all thy family-sins are upon thy head!

But, ah! Jack, when I see my angel, when I am admitted to the presence of this radiant beauty, what will become of all this vapouring?

But, be my end what it may, I am obliged, by thy penetration, fair-one, to proceed by the sap. *Fair and softly. A wife at any time!* Marriage will be always in my power.

When put to the university, the same course of *initial studies* will qualify the yonker for the one line or for the other. The *genius* ought to point out the future lawyer, divine, or physician!—So the same cautious conduct, with such a vigilance, will do either for the *wife*, or for the *no*-wife. When I reform, I'll marry. 'Tis time enough for the *one*, the *lady* must say—For the *other*, say *I!*

But how I ramble!—This it is to be in such a situation, that I know not what to resolve upon.

I'll tell thee my *inclinings*, as I proceed. The *pro's* and the the *con's* I'll tell thee: but being got too far from the track I set out in, I will close here. I may however write every day something, and send it as opportunity offers.

Regardless, nevertheless, I shall be in all I write, of connexion, accuracy, or of any thing but of my own imperial will and pleasure.

LETTER IV.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT, APRIL 12.

I Have your narrative, my dear. You are the same noble creature you ever were. Above disguise, above art, above attempting to extenuate a failing.

The only family in the world, yours, surely, that could have driven such a daughter upon such extremities.

But you must not be so very much too good for *them*, and for the *case*.

You lay the blame so properly and so unsparingly *upon your meeting him*, that nothing can be added to that subject by your worst enemies, were they to see what you have written.

I am not surprized, now I have read your narrative, that so bold and so contriving a man—I am forced to break off——

You

* *

YOU ſtood it out much better and longer—Here again comes my buſtling, jealous mother!

* *

DON'T be ſo angry at yourſelf. Did you not do for the beſt at the time? As to your firſt fault, *the anſwering his letters*; it was always incumbent upon you to aſſume the guardianſhip of ſuch a family, when the bravo of it had run riot as he did, and brought himſelf into danger.

Except your mother, who has no will of her own, have any of them common ſenſe?

Forgive me, my dear—Here is that ſtupid uncle Antony of yours. A pragmatical, conceited, poſitive—He came yeſterday, in a fearful pucker, and puffed, and blowed, and ſtumped about our hall and parlour, while his meſſage was carried up.

My mother was dreſſing. Theſe widows are as ſtarched as the old batchelors. She would not ſee him in a diſhabille for the world—*What can ſhe mean by it?*

His errand was to ſet her againſt you, and to ſhew their determined rage on your going away. The iſſue proved too evidently that this was the principal end of his viſit.

The odd creature deſired to ſpeak with her alone. I am not uſed to ſuch exceptions whenever any viſits are made to my mother.

When ſhe was *primmed out*, down ſhe came to him. They locked themſelves in. The two poſitive heads were put together—Cloſe together I ſuppoſe; for I liſtened, but could hear nothing diſtinctly, though they both ſeemed full of their ſubject.

I had a good mind, once or twice, to have made them open the door. Could I have been ſure of keeping but tolerably my temper, I would have *demanded* admittance. But I was afraid, if I had obtained it, that I ſhould have forgot it was my mother's houſe, and been for turning him out of it. To come to rave againſt and abuſe my deareſt, deareſt, faultleſs friend! and the ravings to be encouraged, and perhaps joined in, in order to juſtify themſelves; the one for contributing to drive that dear friend out of her father's houſe; the other for refuſing her a temporary aſylum, till the reconciliation could have been effected, which her dutiful heart was ſet upon; and which it would have become the love which my mother had ever pretended for you, to have mediated for—Could I have had patience!

The *iſſue*, as I ſaid, ſhewed what the errand was—It's firſt appearance, after the old fuſty fellow was marched off, [*You muſt excuſe me, my dear*] was in a kind of gloomy, Harlowe-like reſervedneſs in my mother; which, upon a few reſenting flirts of mine, was followed by a rigorous prohibition of correſpondence.

This put us, you may ſuppoſe, upon terms not the moſt agreeable. I deſired to know, if I were prohibited *dreaming* of you?—For, my dear, you have all my ſleeping as well as waking hours.

I can eaſily allow for your correſpondence with your wretch at firſt (and yet your motions were excellent) by the effect this prohibition has upon me; ſince, if poſſible, it has made me love you better than before; and I am more deſirous than ever of correſponding with you.

But I have nevertheleſs a much more laudable motive—I ſhould think myſelf the unworthieſt of creatures, could I be brought to ſlight a dear friend, and ſuch a meritorious one, in her diſtreſs.—I would die firſt—And ſo I told my mother. And I have deſired her not to watch me in my retired hours; nor to inſiſt upon my lying with her conſtantly, which ſhe now does more earneſtly than ever. 'Twere better, I told her, that the Harlowe-Betty were borrowed to be ſet over me.

Mr. Hickman, who greatly honours you, has, unknown to me, interpoſed ſo warmly in your favour with my mother, that it makes for him no ſmall merit with me.

I cannot, at preſent, write to every particular, unleſs I would be in *jet* defiance.—Teaze, teaze, teaze, for ever! The ſame thing, though anſwered fifty times over, in every hour to be repeated—Lord bleſs me! what a life muſt my poor father—But let me remember to whom I am writing.

If this ever-active, ever-miſchievous monkey of a man, this Lovelace, contrived, as you ſuſpect—But here comes my mother again—'Aye, ſtay a little 'longer, my mamma, if you pleaſe—

'I can but be ſuſpected! I can but be 'chidden for making you wait; and 'chidden I am ſure to be, whether I 'do or not, in the way you, my good 'mamma, are *Antony'd* into.'

Bleſs me!—how impatient ſhe is!—How ſhe thunders at the door!—'This 'moment, Madam!—How came I to 'double-lock myſelf in!—What have 'I done with the key!—Deuce take the 'key!—Dear Madam! You flutter one 'ſo!'

* *

You may believe, my dear, that I took care of my papers before I opened the door. We have had a charming dialogue—She flung from me in a paſſion.

So—what's now to be done?—Sent for down in a very peremptory manner, I aſſure you. What an incoherent letter will you have, when I can get it to you! But now I know where to ſend it, Mr. Hickman ſhall find me a meſſenger. Yet, if he be detected, poor ſoul, he will be *Harlowed-off*, as well as his *meek miſtreſs*.

THURSDAY, APRIL 13.

I HAVE this moment your continuation-letter. And am favoured, at preſent, with the abſence of my Argus-eyed mother.

Dear creature!—I can account for all your difficulties. A young lady of your delicacy!—And with ſuch a man! —I muſt be brief.

The man's a fool, my dear, with all his pride, and with all his complaiſance, *and affected regards to your injunctions*. Yet his ready inventions—

Sometimes I think you ſhould go to Lady Betty's—I know not what to adviſe you to do.—I *ſhould*, if you were not ſo intent upon reconciling yourſelf to your relations. Yet they are implacable. You can have no hopes of them. Your uncle's errand to my mother may convince you of that; and if you have an anſwer to your letter to your ſiſter, that will confirm you, I dare ſay.

You need not to have been afraid of aſking me, whether, upon reading your narrative, I thought any extenuation could lie for what you have done! I have, as above, before I had your queſtion, told you my mind as to that. —And I repeat, that I think, your *provocations* and *inducements* conſidered, you are free from blame: at leaſt, the freeſt that ever young creature was who took ſuch a ſtep.

But *you took it not*—You were *driven on one ſide*, and, poſſibly, *tricked on the other*.—If any woman on earth ſhall be circumſtanced as you were, and ſhall hold out ſo long as you did, againſt her perſecutors on one hand, and her ſeducer on the other, I will forgive her for all the reſt of her conduct, be it what it will.

All your acquaintance, you may ſuppoſe, talk of nobody but you. Some indeed bring your admirable character for a plea againſt you: but nobody does, or *can*, acquit your father and uncles.

Every body ſeems apprized of your brother's and ſiſter's motives. Your flight is, no doubt, the very thing they aimed to drive you to, by the various attacks they made upon you; unhoping (as they muſt do all the time) the ſucceſs of their ſchemes in Solmes's behalf. They knew, that if once you were reſtored to favour, the ſuſpended love of your father and uncles, like a river breaking down a temporary obſtruction, would return with double force; and that then you would expoſe, and triumph over all their arts.—And now, I hear they *enjoy* their ſucceſsful malice.

Your father is all rage and violence. He ought, I am ſure, to turn his rage inward. All your family accuſe you of acting with *deep art*; and are put upon ſuppoſing that you are actually *every hour exulting over them*, with your man, in the ſucceſs of it.

They all pretend now, that your trial of Wedneſday was to be the laſt.

Advantage would indeed, my mother owns, have been taken of your yielding, if you had yielded. But had you not been to be prevailed upon, they would have given up their ſcheme, and taken your promiſe for renouncing Lovelace—Believe them who will!

They own, however, that a miniſter was to be preſent—Mr. Solmes was to be at hand—And your father was previouſly to try his authority over you, in order to make you ſign the ſettlements—All of it a romantick contrivance of your wild-headed fooliſh brother, I make no doubt. Is it likely that he and Bell would have given way to your reſtoration to favour, ſuppoſing it in their power to hinder it, on

any

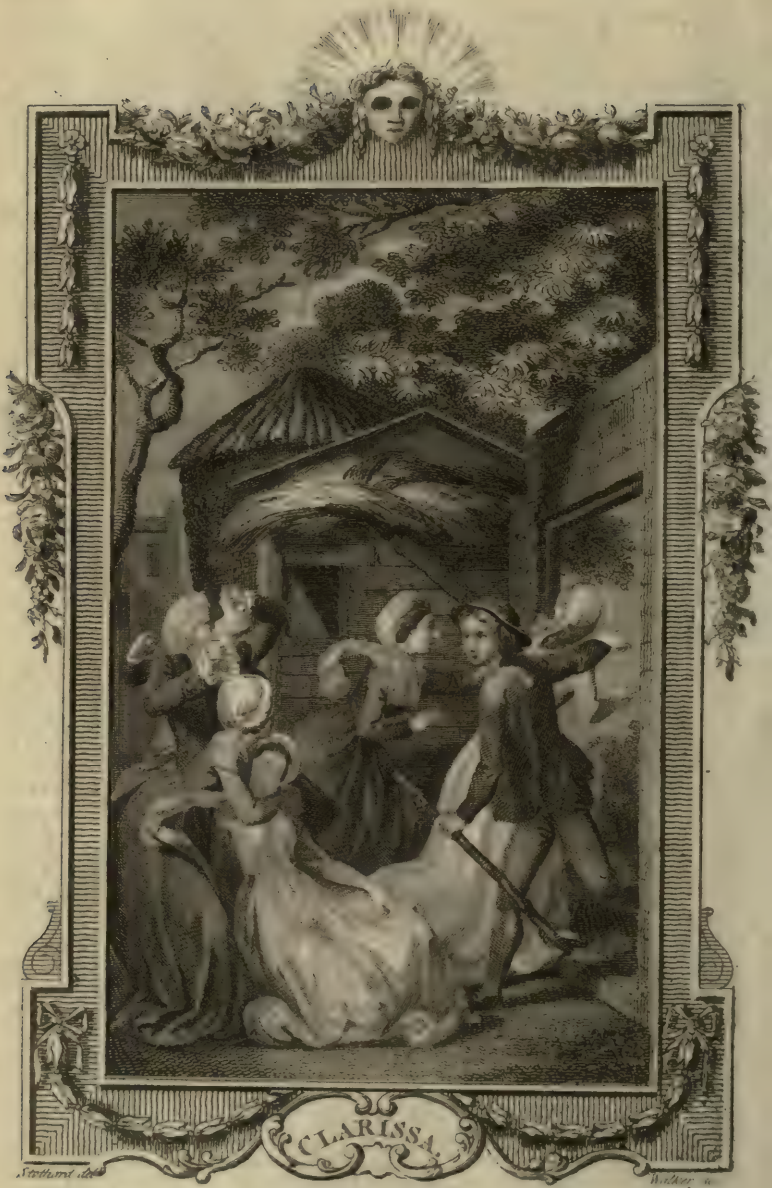

Plate V.

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Plate XXI. Published as the Act directs, by Harrison & C.° May 6. 1784

any other terms than thoſe their hearts had been ſo long ſet upon?

How they took your flight, when they found it out, may be better ſuppoſed than deſcribed.

Your aunt Hervey it ſeems was the firſt that went down to the Ivy Summer Houſe, in order to acquaint you that their ſearch was over. Betty followed her; and they not finding you there, went on towards the caſcade, according to a hint of yours.

Returning by the garden-door, they met a ſervant [*They don't ſay, it was that Joſeph Leman; but it is very likely that it was he*] running, as he ſaid, from purſuing Mr. Lovelace (a great hedge ſtake in his hand, and out of breath) to alarm the family.

If it were this fellow, and if he were employed in the double agency of cheating them, and cheating you, what ſhall we think of the wretch you are with?—Run away from him, my dear, if ſo—No matter to whom—or marry him, if you cannot.

Your aunt and all your family were accordingly alarmed by this fellow—*evidently when too late for purſuit.* They got together; and, when a *poſſe*, ran to the place of interview; and ſome of them as far as to the tracks of the chariot-wheels, without ſtopping. And having heard the man's tale upon the ſpot, a general lamentation, a mutual upbraiding, and rage, and grief, were echoed from the different perſons, according to their different tempers and conceptions. And they returned like fools as they went.

Your brother, at firſt, ordered horſes and armed men to be got ready for a purſuit. Solmes and your uncle *Tony* were to be of the party. But your mother and your aunt Hervey diſſuaded them from it, for fear of adding evil to evil; not doubting but Lovelace had taken meaſures to ſupport himſelf in what he had done; and eſpecially when the ſervant declared, that he ſaw you run with him as faſt as you could ſet foot to the ground; and that there were ſeveral armed men on horſeback at a ſmall diſtance off.

* *

My mother's abſence was owing to her ſuſpicion, that the Knollys's were to aſſiſt in our correſpondence. She made them a viſit upon it. *She does every thing at once.* And they have promiſed, that no more letters ſhall be left there, without her knowledge.

But Mr. Hickman has engaged one Filmer, a huſbandman in the lane we call Finch Lane, near us, to receive them. Thither you will be pleaſed to direct yours, under cover, to Mr. John Soberton; and Mr. Hickman himſelf will call for them there; and there ſhall leave mine. It goes againſt me too, to make him ſo uſeful to me.—He looks already ſo proud upon it!—I ſhall have him [Who knows?] give himſelf airs.—He had beſt conſider, that the favour he has been long aiming at, may put him into a very dangerous, a very tickliſh ſituation. He that can oblige, may diſoblige—Happy for ſome people not to have it in their power to offend!

I will have patience, if I can, for a while, to ſee if theſe buſtlings in my mother will ſubſide—But upon my word, I will not long bear this uſage.

Sometimes I am ready to think, that my mother carries it thus on purpoſe to tire me out, and to make me the ſooner marry. If I find it to be ſo, and that Hickman, in order to make a merit with me, is in the low plot, I will never bear him in my ſight.

Plotting wretch, as I doubt your man is, I wiſh to Heaven that you were married, that you might brave them all, and not be forced to hide yourſelf, and be hurried from one inconvenient place to another. I charge you, omit not to lay hold on any handſome opportunity that may offer for that purpoſe.

Here again comes my mother.

* *

We look mighty glum upon each other, I can tell you. She had not beſt *Harlowe* me at this rate—I won't bear it.

I have a vaſt deal to write. I know not what to write firſt. Yet my mind is full, and ready to run over.

I am got into a private corner of the garden, to be out of her way.—Lord help theſe mothers!—Do they think they can prevent a daughter's writing, or doing any-thing ſhe has a mind to do, by ſuſpicion, watchfulneſs, and ſcolding?—They had better place a confidence in one by half—A generous mind ſcorns to abuſe a generous confidence.

You have a nice, a very nice part to act

act with this wretch—Who yet has, I think, but one plain path before him. I pity you—But you must make the best of the lot you have been forced to draw. Yet I see your difficulties.—But if he do not offer to abuse your confidence, I would have you *seem* at least to place some in him.

If you think not of marrying soon, I approve of your resolution to fix somewhere out of his reach. And if he know not where to find you, so much the better. Yet I verily believe, they would force you back, could they but come at you, if they were not afraid of *him*.

I think, by all means, you should demand of both your trustees to be put in possession of your own estate. Mean time I have sixty guineas at your service. I beg you will command them. Before they are gone, I'll take care you shall be further supplied. I don't think you'll have a shilling or a shilling's worth of your own from your relations, unless you extort it from them.

As they believe you went away by your own consent, they are, it seems, equally surprized and glad that you have left your jewels and money behind you, and have contrived for cloaths so ill. Very little likelihood this shews of their answering your requests.

Indeed every-one who knows not what I *now* know, must be at a loss to account for your *flight*, as they will call it. And how, my dear, can one report it with any tolerable advantage to you?—To say, you *did not intend it* when you met him, who will believe it?—to say, that a person of your known steadiness and punctilio was *over-persuaded* when you gave him the meeting, how will that sound?—To say, you were *tricked out of yourself*, and people were to give credit to it, how disreputable!—And while *unmarried*, and *yet with him*, the man a man of such a character, what would it not lead a censuring world to think?

I want to see how you put it in your letter for your cloaths.

As you may depend upon all the little spiteful things they can offer, instead of sending what you write for, pray accept the sum I tender. What will seven guineas do?—And I will find a way to send you also any of my cloaths and linen for present supply. I beg, my dear Clarissa, that you will not put your Anna Howe upon a foot with Lovelace, in refusing to accept of my offer. If you do not oblige me, I shall be apt to think that you rather incline to be obliged to *him*, than to favour *me*. And if I find this, I shall not know how to reconcile it with your delicacy in other respects.

Pray inform me of every-thing that passes between you and him. My cares for you (however needless, from your own prudence) make me wish you to continue to be very minute. If any-thing occur that you would tell me of if I were present, fail not to put it down in writing, although, from your natural diffidence, it should not appear to you altogether so worthy of your pen, or of my knowing. A stander-by may see more of the game than one that plays. Great consequences, like great folks, generally owe their greatness to small causes, and little incidents.

Upon the whole, I do not now think it is in your power to dismiss him when you please. I apprized you beforehand, that it would not. I repeat therefore, that were I you, I would at least *seem* to place some confidence in him. So long as he is decent, you may. Very visibly observable, to such delicacy as yours, must be that behaviour in him, which will make him unworthy of *some* confidence.

Your relations, according to what old Antony says to *my mother*, and *she to me*, (by way of threatening, that you will not gain your supposed ends upon them by your flight) seem to expect that you will throw yourself into Lady Betty's protection; and that she will offer to mediate for you: and they vow, that they will never hearken to any terms of accommodation that shall come from that quarter. They might speak out, and say, from *any* quarter; for I dare-aver, that your brother and sister will not let them cool—At least, till their uncles have made such dispositions, and perhaps your father too, as they would have them make.

As this letter will apprize you of an alteration in the place to which you must direct your next, I send it by a friend of Mr. Hickman, who may be depended upon. He has business in the neighbourhood of Mrs. Sorlings; and he knows her. He will return to Mr. Hickman this night; and bring back any letter you shall have ready to send,

send, or can get ready. It is moonlight. He'll not mind waiting for you. I chuse not to send by any of Mr. Hickman's servants—at present, however. Every hour is now, or may be, important; and may make an alteration in your resolutions necessary.

I hear at this instant, my mother calling about her, and putting everybody into motion. She will soon, I suppose, make *me* and *my* employment the subjects of her enquiry.

Adieu, my dear. May Heaven preserve you, and restore you with honour as unsullied as your mind to *your ever-affectionate*

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER V.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON, APRIL 13.

I Am infinitely concerned, my ever-dear and ever kind friend, that I am the sad occasion of the displeasure between your mother and you.—How many persons have I made unhappy!

Had I not to console myself, that my error is not owing to wicked precipitation, I should be the most miserable of all creatures. As it is, I am enough punished in the *loss of my character*, more valuable to me than my life; and in the *cruel doubts and perplexities* which, conflicting with my hopes, and each getting the victory by turns, harrow up my soul between them.

I think, however, that you should obey your mother, and decline a correspondence with me; at least for the present. Take care how you fall into my error; for that *begun with carrying on a prohibited correspondence*; a correspondence which I thought it in my power to discontinue at pleasure. My talent is scribbling; and I the readier fell into this freedom, as I found delight in writing; having motives too, which I thought laudable; and, at one time, the permission of all my friends; to write to him *.

Yet as to this correspondence, what hurt could arise from it, if your mother could be prevailed upon to permit it to be continued?—So much prudence and discretion as you have; and you, in writing to me, lying under no temptation of following so bad an example, as I have set—My letters too occasionally filled with self-accusation.

I thank you, my dear, most cordially I thank you, for your kind offers. You may be assured, that I will sooner be beholden to you, than to any-body living. To Mr. Lovelace the last. Do not therefore think, that by declining your favours, I have an intention to lay myself under obligation to him.

I am willing to hope (notwithstanding what you write) that my friends will send me my little money, together with my cloaths. They are too considerate, some of them, at least, to permit that I should be put to such *low* difficulties. Perhaps, they will not be in haste to oblige me. But if not, I cannot yet want. I believe you think, I must not dispute with Mr. Lovelace the expences of the road and lodgings, till I can get a fixed abode. But I hope soon to put an end even to those sort of obligations.

Small hopes indeed of a reconciliation from your account of my uncle's visit to your mother, in order to set her against an almost-friendless creature whom once he loved! *But is it not my duty to try for it?* Ought I to widen my error by obstinacy and resentment, because of their resentment; which must appear reasonable to them, as they suppose my flight premeditated; and as they are made to believe, that I am capable of triumphing *in it*, and *over them*, with the *man they hate?* When I have done all in my power to restore myself to their favour, I shall have the less to reproach myself with.

These considerations make me waver about following your advice, in relation to marriage; and the rather, as he is so full of complaisance with regard to my former conditions, which he calls my *injunctions*. Nor can I now, that my friends, as you inform me, have so strenuously declared *against accepting of the mediation of the ladies of Mr. Lovelace's family*, put myself into their protection, unless I am resolved to give up all hopes of a reconciliation with my own.

Yet if any happy introduction *could*

* See Vol. I. Page 13, 14.

be

be thought of to effect this desirable purpose, how shall terms be proposed to my father, while this man is with me, or near me? On the other hand, should they in his absence get me back by force, (and this, you are of opinion, they would attempt to do, but in fear of him) how will their severest acts of compulsion be justified by my flight from them! — Meanwhile, to what censures, as you remind me, do I expose myself, while he and I are together, and unmarried!—Yet [Can I with patience ask the question?] *is it in my power?*—O, my dear Miss Howe! And am I so reduced, as that, to save the poor remains of my reputation in the world's eye, I must *watch the gracious motion* from this man's lips?

Were my cousin Morden in England, all might still perhaps be determined happily.

If no other mediation than his can be procured to set on foot the wished-for reconciliation, and if my situation with Mr. Lovelace alter not in the interim, I must endeavour to keep myself in a state of independence till he arrive, that I may be at liberty to govern myself by his advice and direction.

I will acquaint you, as you desire, with all that passes between Mr. Lovelace and me. Hitherto I have not discovered any-thing in his behaviour that is *very* exceptionable. Yet I cannot say, that I think the respect he shews me, an easy, unrestrained, and natural respect, although I can hardly tell where the fault is.

But he has doubtless an arrogant and encroaching spirit. Nor is he so polite as his education, and other advantages, might have made one expect him to be. He seems, in short, to be one, who has always had too much of his own will to study to accommodate himself to that of others.

As to the placing of some confidence in him, I shall be as ready to take your advice in this particular, as in all others, and as he will be to deserve it. But *tricked away* as I was by him, not only *against my judgment, but my inclination*, can *he*, or *any-body*, expect, that I should immediately treat him with complaisance, as if I acknowledged obligation to him for carrying me away?—If I did, must he not either think me a vile dissembler *before* he gained that point, or *afterwards?*

Indeed, indeed, my dear, I could tear my hair, on reconsidering what you write, (as to the probability that the dreaded Wednesday was more dreaded than it needed to be) to think, that I should be thus tricked by this man; and that, in all likelihood, through his vile agent Joseph Leman. So premeditated and elaborate a wickedness as it must be!—Must I not, *with such a man*, be wanting *to myself*, if I were *not* jealous and vigilant?—Yet what a life to live for a spirit *so open*, and naturally *so unsuspicious*, as mine?

I am obliged to Mr. Hickman for the assistance he is so kindly ready to give to our correspondence. He is so *little likely* to make to himself an additional merit with the *daughter* upon it, that I shall be very sorry, if he risque any-thing with the *mother* by it.

I am now in a state of obligation: so must rest satisfied with whatever I cannot help. Whom have I the power, once so precious to me, of obliging?—What I mean, my dear, is, that I ought, perhaps, to expect, that my influences over you are weakened by my indiscretion. Nevertheless, I will not, if I can help it, *desert myself*, nor give up the privilege you used to allow me, of telling you what I think of such parts of your conduct as I may not approve.

You must permit me therefore, severe as your mother is against an undesigning offender, to say, that I think your liveliness to her inexcusable—To pass over, for this time, what nevertheless concerns me not a little, the free treatment you almost *indiscriminately* give to my relations.

If you will not, for your *duty's sake*, forbear your tauntings and impatience, let me beseech you, that you will for *mine*.—Since otherwise, your mother may apprehend, that my example, like a leaven, is working itself into the mind of her beloved daughter. And may not such an apprehension give her an irreconcileable displeasure against me?

I inclose the copy of my letter to my sister, which you are desirous to see. You will observe, that although I have not demanded my estate in form, and of my trustees, yet that I have hinted at

Plate XXXI.

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at leave to retire to it. How joyfully would I keep my word, if they would accept of the offer I renew!—It was not proper, I believe you will think, on many accounts, to own that I was carried off againſt my inclination. I am, my deareſt friend, *your ever-obliged and affectionate*

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER VI.

TO MISS ARABELLA HARLOWE.

[INCLOSED TO MISS HOWE IN THE PRECEDING.]

ST. ALBAN'S, APR. 11.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I Have, I confeſs, been guilty of an action which carries with it a raſh and undutiful appearance. And I ſhould have thought it an inexcuſable one, had I been uſed with leſs ſeverity than I have been of late; and had I not too great reaſon to apprehend, that I was to be made a ſacrifice to a man I could not bear to think of. But what is done, is done—Perhaps I could wiſh it had not; and that I had truſted to the relenting of my dear and honoured parents.—Yet this from no other motives, but thoſe of duty to them.—To whom I am ready to return (if I may not be permitted to retire to *The Grove*) on conditions which I before offered to comply with.

Nor ſhall I be in any ſort of dependence upon the perſon by whoſe means I have taken this *truly reluctant ſtep*, inconſiſtent with any reaſonable engagement I ſhall enter into, if I am not farther precipitated. Let me not have it to ſay, now at this important criſis! that I have a ſiſter, but not a friend in that ſiſter. My reputation, dearer to me than life, (whatever you may imagine from the ſtep I have taken) is ſuffering. A little lenity will, even yet, in a great meaſure, reſtore it, and make that paſs for a temporary miſunderſtanding only, which otherwiſe will be a ſtain as durable as life, upon a creature who has already been treated with great *unkindneſs*, to uſe no harſher a word.

For your own ſake therefore, for my brother's ſake, by whom (I muſt ſay) I have been thus precipitated, and for all the family's ſake, aggravate not my fault, if, on recollecting every-thing, you think it one; nor by widening the unhappy difference, expoſe a ſiſter for ever—Prays *your affectionate*

CL. HARLOWE.

I ſhall take it for a very great favour, to have my cloaths directly ſent me, together with fifty guineas, which you will find in my eſcritoire; (of which I incloſe the key) as alſo the divinity and miſcellany claſſes of my little library; and, if it be thought fit, my jewels—Directed for *me*, 'To be left, 'till called for, at Mr. Oſgood's, 'near Soho Square.'

LETTER VII.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

MR. Lovelace, in continuation of his laſt letter, (No. III.) *gives an account to his friend (pretty much to the ſame effect with the lady's) of all that paſſed between them at the inns, in the journey, and till their fixing at Mrs. Sorlings's. To avoid repetition, thoſe paſſages in his narrative are only extracted, which will ſerve to embelliſh hers; to open his views; or to diſplay the humorous talent he was noted for.*

At their alighting at the inn at St. Alban's on Monday night, thus he writes.

THE people who came about us, as we alighted, ſeemed, by their jaw-fallen faces, and goggling eyes, to wonder at beholding a charming young lady, majeſty in her air and aſpect, ſo compoſedly dreſſed, yet with features ſo diſcompoſed, come off a journey which had made the cattle ſmoke, and the ſervants ſweat. I read their curioſity in their faces, and my beloved's uneaſineſs in hers. She caſt a conſcious glance, as ſhe alighted, upon her habit, which was *no habit*; and repulſively, as I may ſay, quitting my aſſiſting hand, hurried into the houſe.

* * *

Ovid was not a greater maſter of metamorphoſes

S ſ

tamorphoſes than thy friend. To the miſtreſs of the houſe I inſtantly changed her into a ſiſter, brought off by ſurprize from a near relation's (where ſhe had wintered) to prevent her marrying a confounded rake [I love always to go as near the truth as I can] whom her father and mother, her eldeſt ſiſter, and all her loving uncles, aunts, and couſins, abhorred. This accounted for my charmer's expected ſullens; for her diſpleaſure when ſhe was to join me again, were it to hold; for her unſuitable dreſs upon the road; and, at the ſame time, gave her a proper and ſeaſonable aſſurance of my honourable views.

Upon the debate between the lady and him, and particularly upon that part where ſhe upbraids him with putting a young creature upon making a ſacrifice of her duty and conſcience, he writes—

ALL theſe, and ſtill more mortifying things, ſhe ſaid.

I heard her in ſilence. But when it came to my turn, I pleaded, I argued, I anſwered her, as well as I could.—And when humility would not do, I raiſed my voice, and ſuffered my eye to ſparkle with anger; hoping to take advantage of that ſweet cowardice which is ſo amiable in the ſex, and to which my victory over this proud beauty is principally owing.

She was not intimidated, however; and was going to riſe upon me in her temper; and would have broken in upon my defence. But when a man talks to a woman upon ſuch ſubjects, let her be ever ſo much in *alt*, 'tis ſtrange, if he cannot throw out a tub to the whale;—that is to ſay, if he cannot divert her from reſenting one bold thing, by uttering two or three full as bold; but for which more favourable interpretations will lie.

To that part, where ſhe tells him of the difficulty ſhe made to correſpond with him at firſt, thus he writes.

VERY true, my precious!—And innumerable have been the difficulties thou haſt made me ſtruggle with. But one day thou mayeſt wiſh, that thou hadſt ſpared this boaſt; as well as thoſe other pretty haughtineſſes, That thou didſt not reject Solmes for *my* ſake: that *my* glory, if I valued myſelf upon carrying thee off, was *thy* ſhame; that I have more merit with *myſelf* than with thee, or any-body elſe; [*What a coxcomb ſhe makes me, Jack!*] that thou wiſheſt thyſelf in thy father's houſe again, *whatever were to be the conſequence.*—If I forgive thee, charmer, for theſe hints, for theſe reflections, for theſe wiſhes, for theſe contempts, I am not the Lovelace I have been reputed to be; and that thy treatment of me ſhews that thou thinkeſt I am.

In ſhort, her whole air throughout this debate, expreſſed a majeſtick kind of indignation, which implied a believed ſuperiority of talents over the perſon to whom ſhe ſpoke.

Thou haſt heard me often expatiate upon the pitiful figure a man muſt make, whoſe wife *has*, or *believes* ſhe has, more ſenſe than himſelf. A thouſand reaſons could I give why I ought not to think of marrying Miſs Clariſſa Harlowe: at leaſt till I can be ſure, that ſhe loves me with the preference I muſt expect from a wife.

I begin to ſtagger in my reſolutions. Ever averſe as I was to the Hymeneal ſhackles, how eaſily will old prejudices recur! Heaven give me the heart to be honeſt to my Clariſſa!—There's a prayer, Jack! If I ſhould not be heard, what a ſad thing would that be, for the moſt admirable of women!—Yet, as I do not often trouble Heaven with my prayers, who knows but this may be granted?

But there lie before me ſuch charming difficulties, ſuch ſcenery for intrigue, for ſtratagem, for enterprize—What a horrible thing, that my talents point all that way!—When I know what is honourable and juſt; and would almoſt wiſh to be honeſt?—*Almoſt* I ſay; for ſuch a varlet am I, that I cannot altogether wiſh it, for the ſoul of me!—Such a triumph over the whole ſex, if I can ſubdue this lady! My maiden vow, as I may call it!—For did not the ſex begin with me?—And does this lady ſpare me?—Thinkeſt thou, Jack, that I ſhould have ſpared my roſebud, had I been ſet at defiance thus?—Her grandmother beſought me, at firſt, *to ſpare her roſebud*; and when a girl is put, or puts herſelf, into a man's power, what can he wiſh for *further?* while I always conſidered oppoſition

and

and resistance as a challenge to do my worst *.

Why, why, will the dear creature take such pains to appear all ice to me? —Why will she, by *her* pride, awaken *mine?*—Hast thou not seen, in the above, how contemptibly she treats me?—What have I not suffered *for* her, and even *from* her?—Ought I to bear being told, that she will despise me, if I value myself above that odious Solmes?

Then she cuts me short in all my ardours. To *vow fidelity*, is by a cursed turn upon me, to shew, that there is reason, in my own opinion, for doubt of it.—The very same reflection upon me once before †. In my power, or out of my power, all one to this lady. —So, Belford, my poor vows are crammed down my throat, before they can well rise to my lips. And what can a lover say to his mistress, if she will neither let him lye nor swear?

One little piece of artifice I had recourse to: when she pushed so hard for me to leave her, I made a request to her, upon a condition she could not refuse; and pretended as much gratitude upon her granting it, as if it were a favour of the last consequence.

And what was this? but to promise what she had before promised, never to marry any other man, while I am living, and single, unless I should give her cause for high disgust against me. This, you know, was promising nothing, because she could be offended at any time, and was to be the sole judge of the offence. But it shewed her, how reasonable and just my expectations were; and that I was no encroacher.

She consented; and asked what security I expected? Her word only.

She gave me her word: but I besought her excuse for sealing it. And in the same moment (since to have waited for consent would have been asking for a denial) saluted her. And, believe me, or not, but, as I hope to live, it was the first time I had the courage to touch her charming lips with mine. And this I tell thee, Belford, that that single pressure (as modestly put too, as if I were as much a virgin as herself, that she might not be afraid of me another time) delighted me more than ever I was delighted by the *ultimatum* with any other woman. —So precious do awe, reverence, and apprehended prohibition, make a favour!

And now, Belford, I am only afraid, that I shall be *too* cunning; for she does not at present talk enough for me. I hardly know what to make of the dear creature yet.

I kept the brother's part on Monday night before the landlady at St. Alban's; asking my sister's pardon for carrying her off so unprepared for a journey; prated of the joy my father and mother, and all our friends, would have on receiving her; and this with so many circumstances, that I perceived, by a look she gave me, that went through my very reins, that I had gone too far. I apologized for it indeed when alone; but could not penetrate for the soul of me, whether I made the matter better or worse by it.

But I am of too frank a nature: my success, and the joy I have because of the jewel I am half in possession of, has not only unlocked my bosom, but left the door quite open.

This is a confounded sly sex. Would she but speak out, as I do—But I must learn reserves of her.

She must needs be unprovided of money: but has too much pride to accept of any from me. I would have had her to go to town, [*To town, if possible, must I get her to consent to go*] in order to provide herself with the richest of silks which that can afford. But neither is this to be assented to. And yet, as my intelligencer acquaints me, her implacable relations are resolved to distress her all they can.

These wretches have been most gloriously raving, ever since her flight; and still, thank Heaven, continue to rave; and will, I hope, for a twelvemonth to come. Now, at last, it is my day!

Bitterly do they regret, that they permitted her poultry visits, and garden-walks, which gave her the opportunity to effect an escape which they suppose preconcerted. For, as to her dining in the Ivy Bower, they had a cunning design to answer upon her in that permission, as Betty told Joseph her lover ‡.

They lost, they say, an excellent pretence for confining her *more* closely

* See Vol. I. Page 107. † See Vol. II. Page 178. ‡ Vol. II. Letter XLVI. Par. 39.

on my threatening to rescue her, if they offered to carry her against her will to old Antony's moated House *. For this, as I told thee at the Hart, and as I once hinted to the dear creature herself †, they had it in deliberation to do; apprehending, that I might attempt to carry her off, either with or without her consent, on some one of those connived-at excursions.

But here my honest Joseph, who gave me the information, was of admirable service to me. I had taught him to make the Harlowes believe, that I was as communicative to *my* servants, as their stupid James was to Joseph ‡: Joseph, as they supposed, by tampering with Will §, got all my secrets, and was acquainted with all my motions. And having also undertaken to watch all those of his young lady ‖, the wise family were secure; and so was my beloved; and so was I.

I once had it in my head, (and I hinted it to thee ¶ in a former) in case such a step should be necessary, to attempt to carry her off by surprize from the Wood House; as it is remote from the dwelling-house. This had I attempted, I should certainly have effected, by the help of the confraternity: and it would have been an action worthy of us all.—But Joseph's conscience, as he called it, stood in my way; for he thought, it must have been known to be done by his connivance. I could, I dare say, have overcome this scruple, *as easily as I did many of his others*, had I not depended at one time upon her meeting me at a midnight or late hour; [And, if she had, she never would have gone back] at other times, upon the cunning family's doing my work for me, equally against their knowledge or their wills.

For well I knew, that James and Arabella were determined never to leave off their foolish trials and provocations, till, by tiring her out, they had either made her Solmes's wife, or guilty of some such rashness as should throw her for ever out of the favour of both her uncles; though they had too much malice in their heads to intend service to me by their persecutions of her.

LETTER VIII.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

IN CONTINUATION.

I Obliged the dear creature highly, I could perceive, by bringing Mrs. Greme to attend her, and to suffer that good woman's recommendation of lodgings to take place, on her refusal to go to *The Lawn*.

She must believe all my views to be honourable, when I had provided for her no particular lodgings, leaving it to her choice, whether she would go to M. Hall, to The Lawn, to London, or to either of the dowagers of my family.

She was visibly pleased with my motion of putting Mrs. Greme into the chaise with her, and riding on horseback myself.

Some people would have been apprehensive of what might pass between her and Mrs. Greme. But as all my relations either know or believe the justice of my intentions by her, I was in no pain on that account; and the less, as I have been always above hypocrisy, or wishing to be thought better than I am. And indeed, what occasion has a man to be an hypocrite, who has hitherto found his views upon the sex better answered, for his being known to be a rake? Why, even my beloved here denied not to correspond with me, though her friends had taught her to think me a libertine—Who then would be trying a *new* and *worse* character?

And then Mrs. Greme is a pious matron, and would not have been biassed against the truth on any consideration. She used formerly, while there were any hopes of my reformation, to pray for me. She hardly continues the good custom, I doubt; for her worthy lord makes no scruple, occa-

* See Vol. II. Letter XXXV. and Letter XXXVIII. Paragraph 1.
† Ibid. Letter XXXV. Paragraph 4. See also Letter XIV. Paragraph 3.
‡ Ibid. Letter XLVI. Paragraph 6, and 39.
§ This will be farther explained in Letter XVII. of this Volume.
‖ See Vol. I. Page 93, 108.
¶ Ibid. Page 109.

sionally

ſionally to rave againſt me to man, woman, and child, as they come in his way. He is very undutiful, as thou knoweſt. Surely, I may ſay ſo; ſince all duties are reciprocal. But for Mrs. Greme, *poor woman!* when my lord has the gout, and is at The Lawn, and the chaplain not to be found, ſhe prays by him, or reads a chapter to him in the Bible, or ſome other good book.

Was it not therefore right, to introduce ſuch a good ſort of woman to the dear creature; and to leave them, without reſerve, to their own talk!—And very buſy in talk I ſaw they were, as they rode; and *felt* it too; for moſt charmingly glowed my cheeks.

I hope I ſhall be honeſt, I once more ſay: but as we frail mortals are not our own maſters at all times, I muſt endeavour to keep the dear creature unapprehenſive, until I can get her to *our acquaintance's in London*, or to ſome *other ſafe place there*. Should I, in the interim, give her the leaſt room for ſuſpicion; or offer to reſtrain her; ſhe can make her appeals to ſtrangers, and call the country in upon me; and, perhaps, throw herſelf upon her relations on their own terms. And were I now to loſe her, how unworthy ſhould I be to be the prince and leader of ſuch a confraternity as ours!—How unable to look up among men! or to ſhew my face among women!

As things at preſent ſtand, ſhe dare not own, that ſhe went off againſt her own conſent; and I have taken care to make all the *implacables* believe, that ſhe eſcaped *with* it.

She has received an anſwer from Miſs Howe, to the letter written to her from St. Alban's *.

Whatever are the contents, I know not; but ſhe was drowned in tears on the peruſal of it. And I am the ſufferer.

Miſs Howe is a charming creature too; but confoundedly ſmart and ſpiritful. I am a good deal afraid of her. Her mother can hardly keep her in. I muſt continue to play off *old Antony*, by my *honeſt Joſeph*, upon that mother, in order to manage that daughter, and oblige my beloved to an abſolute dependence upon myſelf †.

Mrs. Howe is impatient of contradiction. So is Miſs. A young lady who is ſenſible that ſhe has all the maternal requiſites herſelf, to be under maternal controul;—fine ground for a man of intrigue to build upon!—A mother over-notable; a daughter over-ſenſible; and their Hickman, who is—over-neither: but merely a paſſive—

Only that I have an object ſtill more deſirable!

Yet how unhappy, that theſe two young ladies lived ſo near each other, and are ſo well acquainted! Elſe how charmingly might I have managed them both!

But *one* man cannot have every woman worth having—Pity though—when the man is ſuch a VERY clever fellow!

LETTER IX.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

IN CONTINUATION.

NEVER was there ſuch a pair of ſcribbling lovers as we; yet perhaps whom it ſo much concerns to keep from each other what each writes. She *won't* have any-thing elſe to do. I *would*, if ſhe'd let me. I am not reformed enough for a huſband.—*Patience is a virtue*, Lord M. ſays. *Slow and ſure*, is another of his ſentences. If I had not a great deal of that virtue, I ſhould not have waited the Harlowes own time of ripening into execution my plots upon themſelves and upon their goddeſs-daughter.

My beloved has been writing to her ſaucy friend, I believe, all that has befallen her, and what has paſſed between us hitherto. She will poſſibly have fine ſubjects for her pen, if ſhe be as minute as I am.

I would not be ſo barbarous as to permit old Antony to ſet Mrs. Howe againſt her, did I not dread the conſequences of the correſpondence between the two young ladies. So lively the one, ſo vigilant, ſo prudent both, who would not wiſh to outwit ſuch girls, and to be able to twirl them round his finger?

My charmer has written to her ſiſter for her cloaths, for ſome gold, and for

* Vol. II. Letter XLVII.

† See Vol. I. p. 93.

ſome

some of her books. What books can tell her more than she knows? But *I* can. So she had better study *me*.

She *may* write. She must be obliged to me at last with all her pride. Miss Howe indeed will be ready enough to supply her; but I question, whether she can do it without her mother, who is as covetous as the grave. And my agent's agent, old Antony, has already given the mother a hint which will make her jealous of *pecuniaries*.

Besides, if Miss Howe has money by her, I can put her mother upon borrowing it of her: nor blame me, Jack, for contrivances that have their foundation in generosity. Thou knowest my spirit; and that I should be proud to lay an obligation upon my charmer to the amount of half, nay, to the whole of my estate. Lord M. has more for me than I can ever wish for. My predominant passion is *girl*, not *gold*; nor value I *this*, but as it helps me to *that*, and gives me independence.

I was forced to put it into the sweet novice's head, as well for *my* sake as for *hers* (left we should be traceable by *her* direction) whither to direct the sending of her cloaths, if they incline to do her that small piece of justice.

If they do, I shall begin to dread a reconciliation; and must be forced to muse for a contrivance or two, to prevent it; and *to avoid mischief*. For that (as I have told honest Joseph Leman) is a great point with me.

Thou wilt think me a sad fellow, I doubt. But are not all rakes sad fellows?—And art not thou, to thy little power, as bad as any? If thou dost all that's in thy head and in thy heart to do, thou art worse than I; for I do not, I assure you.

I proposed, and she consented, that her cloaths, or whatever else her relations should think fit to send her, should be directed to thy cousin Osgood's. Let a special messenger, at my charge, bring me any letter, or portable parcel, that shall come. If not portable, give me notice of it. But thou'lt have no trouble of this sort from her relations, I dare be sworn. And in this assurance, I will leave them, I think, to act upon their own heads. A man would have no more to answer for than needs must.

But one thing, while I think of it; *which is of great importance to be attended to*—You must hereafter write to me in character, as I shall do to you. It would be a confounded thing to be blown up by a train of my own laying. And who knows what opportunities a man in love may have against himself? In changing a coat or waistcoat, something might be forgotten. I once suffered that way. Then for the sex's curiosity, it is but remembering, in order to guard against it, that the name of their common mother was Eve.

Another thing remember; I have changed my name: changed it without an act of parliament. Robert Huntingford it is now. Continue *Esquire*. It is a respectable addition, although every sorry fellow assumes it, almost to the banishment of the usual travelling one of *captain*. To be left till called for, at the posthouse at Hertford.

Upon naming thee, she asked thy character. I gave thee a better than thou deservest, in order to do credit to *myself*. Yet I told her, that thou wert an aukward fellow; and this to do credit to *thee*, that she may not, if ever she be to see thee, expect a cleverer man than she'll find. Yet thy *apparent* aukwardness befriends thee not a little: for wert thou a sightly mortal, people would discover nothing extraordinary in thee, when they conversed with thee: whereas, seeing a bear, they are surprized to find in thee any-thing that is like a man. Felicitate thyself then upon thy defects; which are evidently thy principal perfections; and which occasion thee a distinction which otherwise thou wouldst never have.

The lodgings we are in at present are not convenient. I was so delicate as to find fault with them, as communicating with each other, because I knew *she* would; and told her, That were I sure she was safe from pursuit, I would leave her in them, (since such was her earnest desire and expectation) and go to London.

She must be an infidel against all reason and appearances, if I do not banish even the *shadow* of mistrust from her heart.

Here are two young likely girls, daughters of the widow Sorlings; that's the name of our landlady.

I have only, at present, admired them in their dairy-works. How greedily do the sex swallow praise!—Did I not once

once in the ſtreets of London, ſee a well-dreſſed handſome girl laugh, bridle, and viſibly enjoy the praiſes of a ſooty dog, a chimney-ſweeper; who with his empty ſack croſs his ſhoulder, after giving her the way, ſtopt, and held up his bruſh and ſhovel in admiration of her? —'Egad, girl,' thought I, 'I deſpiſe 'thee as Lovelace: but were I the 'chimney-ſweeper, and could only 'contrive to get into thy preſence, my 'life to thy virtue, I would have thee.'

So pleaſed was I with the younger Sorlings, for the elegance of her works, that I kiſſed her, and ſhe made me a curtſey for my condeſcenſion; and bluſhed, and ſeemed *ſenſible all over*: encouraging, yet innocently, ſhe adjuſted her handkerchief, and looked towards the door, as much as to ſay, ſhe would not tell, were I to kiſs her again.

Her eldeſt ſiſter popt upon her. The conſcious girl bluſhed again, and looked ſo confounded, that I made an excuſe for her, which gratified both. 'Mrs. Betty,' ſaid I, 'I have been ſo 'much pleaſed with the neatneſs of 'your dairy-works, that I could not 'help ſaluting your ſiſter: you have '*your* ſhare of merit in them, I am 'ſure—Give me leave——'

Good ſouls!—I like them both—She curtſeyed too—How I love a grateful temper! O that my Clariſſa were but half ſo acknowledging!

I think I muſt get one of them to attend my charmer when ſhe removes.—The mother ſeems to be a notable woman. She had not beſt, however, be *too* notable: ſince, were ſhe by ſuſpicion to give a face of difficulty to the matter, it would prepare me for a trial with one or both the daughters.

Allow me a little rodomontade, Jack—But really and truly my heart is fixed. I can think of no creature breathing of the ſex, but my Gloriana.

LETTER X.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

IN CONTINUATION.

THIS is Wedneſday; the day that I was to have loſt my charmer for ever to the hideous Solmes! With what high ſatisfaction and heart's-eaſe can I now ſit down, and triumph over my men in ſtraw at Harlowe Place! Yet 'tis perhaps beſt for them, that ſhe got off as ſhe did. Who knows what conſequences might have followed upon my attending her in; or (if ſhe had not met me) upon my projected viſit, followed by my myrmidons?

But had I even gone in with her unaccompanied, I think I had but little reaſon for apprehenſion: for well thou knoweſt, that *the tame ſpirits* which value themſelves upon reputation, and are held within the ſkirts of the law by political conſiderations only, may be compared to an infectious ſpider; which will run into his hole the moment one of his threads is touched by a finger that can cruſh him, leaving all his toils defenceleſs, and to be bruſhed down at the will of the potent invader. While a ſilly fly that has neither courage nor ſtrength to reſiſt, no ſooner gives notice, by it's buz and it's ſtruggles, of it's being entangled, but out ſteps the ſelf-circumſcribed tyrant, winds round and round the poor inſect, till he covers it with his bowel-ſpun toils; and when ſo fully ſecured, that it can neither move leg nor wing, ſuſpends it, as if for a ſpectacle to be exulted over: then ſtalking to the door of his cell, turns about, glotes over it at a diſtance; and, ſometimes advancing, ſometimes retiring, preys at leiſure upon it's vitals.'

But now I think of it, will not this compariſon do as well for the *entangled girls*, as for the *tame ſpirits?*—Better o' my conſcience!—'Tis but comparing the ſpider to us brave fellows; and it *quadrates*.

Whatever our hearts are in, our heads will follow. Begin with *ſpiders*, with *flies*; with what we will, girl is the centre of gravity, and we all naturally tend to it.

Nevertheleſs, to recur; I cannot but obſerve, that theſe *tame ſpirits* ſtand a poor chance in a fairly offenſive war with ſuch of us mad fellows, as are above all law, and ſcorn to ſculk behind the hypocritical ſcreen of reputation.

Thou knoweſt, that I never ſcruple to throw myſelf amongſt numbers of adverſaries; the more the ſafer: one or two, no fear, will take the part of a ſingle adventurer, if not *intentionally*, in

in *fact*; holding him in, while others hold in the principal antagoniſt, to the augmentation of their mutual proweſs, till both are prevailed upon to compromiſe, or one to abſent: ſo that upon the whole, the law-breakers have the advantage of the law-keepers, all the world over; at leaſt for a time, and till they have run to the end of their race. Add to this, in the queſtion between me and the Harlowes, that the whole family of them muſt know that they have injured me—muſt therefore be afraid of me. Did they not, at their own church, cluſter together like bees, when they ſaw me enter it? Nor knew they which ſhould venture out firſt, when the ſervice was over.

James, indeed, was not there. If he had, he would perhaps have endeavoured to *look* valiant. But there is a ſort of valour in the *face*, which ſhews fear in the *heart*: juſt ſuch a face would James Harlowe's have been, had I made them a viſit.

When I have had ſuch a face and ſuch a heart as I have deſcribed to deal with, I have been all calm and ſerene, and left it to the friends of the blufterer (as I have done to the Harlowes) to do my work for me.

I am about muſtering up in my memory, all that I have ever done, that has been thought praiſe-worthy, or but barely tolerable. I am afraid thou canſt not help me to many remembrances of this ſort: becauſe I never was ſo bad as ſince I have known thee.

Have I not had it in my heart to do *ſome* good that thou canſt remind me of? Study for me, Jack. I have recollected ſome inſtances which I think will *tell in*—But ſee if thou canſt help me to ſome which I may have forgot.

This I may venture to ſay, That the principal blot in my eſcutcheon is owing to theſe girls, theſe confounded girls. But for *them*, I could go to church with a good conſcience: but when I do, there they are. Everywhere does Satan ſpread his ſnares for me! But, now I think of it, what if our governor ſhould appoint churches for the *women* only, and others for the *men*?—Full as proper, I think, for the promoting of *true piety* in both, [much better than the ſynagogue-lattices] as ſeparate boarding-ſchools for their *education*.

There are already male and female dedications of churches.

St. Swithin's, St. Stephen's, St. Thomas's, St. George's, and ſo forth, might be appropriated to the men; and Santa Catharina's, Santa Anna's, Santa Maria's, Santa Margaretta's, for the women.

Yet, were it ſo, and life to be the forfeiture of being found at the female churches, I believe that I, like a ſecond Clodius, ſhould change my dreſs, to come at my Portia or Pompeia, though one the daughter of a Cato, the other the wife of a Cæſar.

But how I *excurſe!*—Yet thou uſedſt to ſay, thou likedeſt my excurſions. If thou doſt, thou'lt have enow of them: for I never had a ſubject I ſo much adored; and with which I ſhall probably be compelled to have ſo much patience before I ſtrike the blow; if the blow I do ſtrike.

But let me call myſelf back to my *recordation* ſubject—Thou needeſt not remind me of my *roſebud*. I have her in my head; and moreover have contrived to give my fair-one an hint of that affair, by the agency of honeſt Joſeph Leman*; although I have not reaped the hoped-for credit of her acknowledgment.

That's the devil; and it was always my hard fate—Every-thing I do that is good, is but as I *ought!*—Every-thing of a contrary nature is brought into the moſt glaring light againſt me—Is this fair? Ought not a balance to be ſtruck; and the credit carried to my account?—Yet I muſt own too, that I half-grudge Johnny this blooming maiden; for, in truth, I think a fine woman too rich a jewel to hang about a poor man's neck.

Surely, Jack, if I am guilty of a fault in my univerſal adorations of the ſex, the *women* in general ought to love me the better for it.

And ſo they do, I thank them heartily; except here and there a covetous little rogue comes croſs me, who under the pretence of loving virtue for it's own ſake, wants to have me all to herſelf.

I have rambled enough.

Adieu, for the preſent.

* See Vol. II. p. 201. 216.

LETTER

LETTER XI.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

THURSDAY NIGHT, APRIL 13.

I Always loved writing, and my unhappy situation gives me now enough of it; and you, I fear, too much. I have had another very warm debate with Mr. Lovelace. It brought on the subject which you advised me not to decline, when it handsomely offered. And I want to have either your acquittal or blame for having suffered it to go off without effect.

The impatient wretch sent up to me several times, while I was writing my last to you, to desire my company: yet his business nothing particular; only to hear *him* talk. The man seems pleased with his own volubility; and, whenever he has collected together abundance of smooth things, he wants me to find an ear for them! Yet he need not; for I don't often gratify him either with giving him the praise for his verboseness, or shewing the pleasure in it, that he would be fond of.

When I had finished the letter, and given it to Mr. Hickman's friend, I was going up again, and had got up half a dozen stairs; when he besought me to stop, and hear what he had to say.

Nothing, as I said, to any new purpose had he to offer; but complainings; and those in a manner, and with an air, as I thought, that bordered upon insolence. He could not live, he told me, unless he had more of my company, and of my *indulgence* too, than I had yet given him.

Hereupon I stept down, and into the parlour, not a little out of humour with him; and the more, as he has very *quietly taken up his quarters here*, without talking of removing as he had promised.

We began instantly our angry conference. He provoked me; and I repeated several of the plainest things I had said in our former conversations; and particularly told him, that I was every hour more and more dissatisfied with myself, and with him: that he was not a man, who, in my opinion, improved upon acquaintance; and that I should not be *easy till he had left me to myself*.

He might be surprized at my warmth, perhaps: but really the man looked so like a simpleton, hesitating, and having nothing to say for himself, or that should excuse the peremptoriness of his demand upon me, (when he knew I had been writing a letter which a gentleman waited for) that I flung from him, declaring, that I would be mistress of my own time, and of my own actions, and not be called to account for either.

He was very uneasy till he could again be admitted into my company; and when I was obliged to see him, which was sooner than I liked, never did man put on a more humble and respectful demeanour.

He told me, That he had, upon this occasion, been entering into himself, and had found a great deal of reason to blame himself for an impatience and inconsideration, which, although he meant nothing by it, must be very disagreeable to one of my delicacy. That having always aimed at a *manly sincerity* and *openness of heart*, he had not till now discovered, that both were very consistent with that *true* politeness, which he feared he had too much disregarded, while he sought to avoid the contrary extreme; knowing, that in me he had to deal with a lady, who despised an hypocrite, and who was above all flattery. But from this time forth, I should find such an alteration in his whole behaviour, as might be expected from a man who knew himself to be honoured with the presence and conversation of a person, *who had the most delicate mind in the world*—that was his flourish.

I said, That he might perhaps expect congratulation upon the discovery he had just now made, to wit, That *true politeness* and *sincerity* were reconcileable: but that I, who had, by a perverse fate, been thrown into his company, had abundant reason to regret that he had no sooner found this out.—Since, I believed, very few men of *birth* and *education* were strangers to it.

He knew not, *neither*, he said, that he had so very badly behaved himself, as to deserve so very severe a rebuke.

Perhaps not, I replied: but he might, if so, make another discovery from

what I had said, which might be to *my own* disadvantage. Since, if he had so much reason to be satisfied with *himself*, he would see what an ungenerous person he spoke to, who, when he seemed to give himself airs of humility, which, perhaps, he thought beneath him to assume, had not the civility to make him a compliment upon them; but was ready to take him at his word.

He had long, with infinite pleasure, the pretended *flattery-hater* said, admired my *superior* talents, and a wisdom in so young a lady, perfectly surprizing.

'Let me, Madam,' said he, 'stand 'ever so low in your opinion, I shall 'believe all you say to be just; and 'that I have nothing to do, but to go-'vern myself for the future by your 'example, and by the standard you 'shall be pleased to give me.'

'I know better, Sir,' replied I, 'than to value myself upon your vo-'lubility of speech. As you pretend 'to pay so preferable a regard to sin-'cerity, you shall confine yourself to 'the strict rules of truth, when you 'speak of me to myself; and then, al-'though you shall be so kind as to 'imagine you have *reason* to make me 'a compliment, you will have much 'more to pride yourself in those arts 'which have made so *extraordinary* a 'young creature so great a fool.'

Really, my dear, the man deserves not politer treatment.—And then has he not made a fool, an egregious fool of me!—I am afraid he himself thinks he has.

'I am surprized! I am amazed, Ma-'dam,' returned he, 'at so strange a 'turn upon me!—I am very unhappy, 'that nothing I can do or say will give 'you a good opinion of me!—Would 'to Heaven that I knew what I *can* do 'to obtain the honour of your confi-'dence!'

I told him, *that I desired his absence*, of all things. I saw not, I said, that my friends thought it worth their while to give me disturbance: therefore, if he would set out for London, or Berkshire, or whither he pleased, it would be most agreeable to me, and most reputable too.

He would do so, he said, he *intended to do so*, the moment I was in a place to my liking—in a place convenient for me.

'*This*, Sir, will be so,' said I, 'when you are not here to break in 'upon me, and make the apartments 'inconvenient.'

He did not think this place safe, he replied; and as I intended not to stay here, he had not been so solicitous, as otherwise he should have been, to enjoin privacy to his servants, nor to Mrs. Greme at her leaving me; that there were two or three gentlemen in the neighbourhood, he said, with whose servants his gossiping fellows had scraped acquaintance: so that he could not think of leaving me here unguarded and unattended.—But fix upon any place in England where I could be out of danger, and he would go to the furthermost part of the king's dominions, if by doing so he could make me easy.

I told him plainly that I should never be in humour with myself for *meeting him*; nor with him, for *seducing me away*: that my regrets encreased, instead of diminished; that my reputation was wounded; that nothing I could do would now retrieve it; and that he must not wonder, if I every hour grew more and more uneasy both with myself and him; that upon the whole, I was willing to take care of myself; and when *he* had left me, I should best know what to resolve upon, and whither to go.

He wished, he said, he were at liberty, without giving me offence, or being thought to intend to *infringe the articles I had stipulated and insisted upon*, to make one humble proposal to me. But the *sacred regard* he was determined *to pay to all my injunctions*, (reluctantly as I had on Monday last put it into his power to serve me) would not permit him to make it, unless I would promise to excuse him, if I did not approve of it.

I asked, in some confusion, what he would say?

He prefaced and paraded on; and then out came, with great diffidence, and many apologies, and a bashfulness which sat very awkwardly upon him, a proposal of speedy solemnization: which, he said, would put all right; and make my first three or four months (which otherwise must be passed in obscurity and apprehension) a round of visits and

and visitings to and from all his relations; to Miss Howe; to whom I pleased. And would pave the way to the reconciliation I had so much at heart.

Your advice had great weight with me just then, as well as *his reasons*, and the consideration of my *unhappy situation:* but what could I say? I wanted somebody to speak for me.

The man saw I was not angry at his motion. I only blushed; and that I am sure I did up to the ears; and looked silly, and like a fool.

He wants not courage. Would he have had me catch at his first, at his *very* first word?—I was *silent* too!—And do not the bold sex take silence for a mark of a favour?—Then, *so lately* in my father's house! Having also declared to him in my letters, before I had your advice, that I would not think of marriage till he had passed through a state of probation, as I may call it—How was it possible I could encourage, with *very* ready signs of approbation, such an early proposal; especially so soon after the free treatment he had provoked from me? If I were to die, I could not.

He looked at me with great confidence; as if (notwithstanding his contradictory bashfulness) he would look me through; while my eye but now-and-then could glance at him. He begged my pardon with great humility: he was *afraid* I would think he deserved no other answer, but that of a *contemptuous silence.* True love was fearful of offending. ['Take care, 'Mr. Lovelace,' thought I, 'how 'yours is tried by that rule.'] Indeed so *sacred a regard* [foolish man!] would he have *to all my declarations made before I honoured him*—

I would hear him no further; but withdrew in a confusion *too visible*, and left him to make his nonsensical flourishes to himself.

I will only add, that, if he really wishes for a speedy solemnization, he never could have had a luckier time to press for my consent to it. But he let it go off; and indignation has taken place of it. And now shall it be a point with me, to get him at a distance from me. I am, my dearest friend, *your ever-faithful and obliged*

CL. H.

LETTER XII.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

TUESDAY, APR. 13.

WHY, Jack, thou needest not make such a *wonderment*, as the girls say, if I should have taken large strides already towards reformation: for dost thou not see, that while I have been so assiduously, night and day, pursuing this single charmer, I have infinitely less to answer for, than otherwise I should have had? Let me see, how many days and nights?—Forty, I believe, after open trenches, spent in the sap only, and never a mine sprung yet!

By a moderate computation, a dozen kites might have fallen, while I have been only trying to ensnare this single lark. Nor yet do I see when I shall be able to bring her to my lure: more innocent days yet, therefore!—But reformation for my stalking-horse, I hope, will be a sure, though a slow method to effect all my purposes.

Then, Jack, *thou* wilt have a merit too in engaging my pen, since thy time would be otherwise worse employed; and, after all, who knows but by creating new habits, at the expence of the old, a real reformation may be brought about? I have promised it; and I believe there is a pleasure to be found in being good, reversing that of Nat. Lee's madman—

' —Which none but *good* men know,'

By all this, seest thou not, how greatly preferable it is, on twenty accounts, to pursue a difficult, rather than an easy chace? I have a desire to inculcate this pleasure upon thee, and to teach thee to fly at nobler game than daws, crows, and widgeons: I have a mind to shew thee from time to time, in the course of the correspondence thou hast so earnestly wished me to begin on this illustrious occasion, that these exalted ladies may be abased, and to obviate one of the objections that thou madest to me, when we were last together, that the pleasure which attends these nobler aims, remunerates not the pains they bring with them; since, like a paltry

fellow as thou wert, thou aſſertedſt that all women are alike.

Thou knoweſt nothing, Jack, of the delicacies of intrigue: nothing of the glory of outwitting the witty and the watchful; of the joys that fill the mind of the inventive or contriving genius, ruminating which to uſe of the different webs that offer to him for the entanglement of a haughty charmer, who in her day has given him unnumbered torments.—Thou, Jack, who, like a dog at his eaſe, contenteſt thyſelf to growl over a bone thrown out to thee, doſt not know the joys of a chace, and in purſuing a winding game: theſe I will endeavour to rouze thee to, and then thou wilt have reaſon doubly and trebly to thank me, as well becauſe of thy preſent delight, as with regard to thy proſpects beyond the moon.

To this place I had written, purely to amuſe myſelf, before I was admitted to my charmer. But now I have to tell thee, that I was quite right in my conjecture, that ſhe would ſet up for herſelf, and diſmiſs me: for ſhe has declared in ſo many words, that ſuch was her reſolution. And why? Becauſe, to be plain with me, the more ſhe ſaw of *me*, and of *my ways*, the leſs ſhe liked of either.

This cut me to the heart!—I did not cry indeed!—Had I been a *woman*, I ſhould though; and that moſt plentifully: but I pulled out a white cambrick handkerchief. *That* I could command, but not my *tears*.

She finds fault with my proteſtations; with my profeſſions; with my vows: I cannot curſe a ſervant, the only privilege a maſter is known by, but I am ſuppoſed to be a trooper *.—I muſt not ſay, 'By my ſoul;' nor, 'As I hope to be ſaved.' Why, Jack, how particular this is! Would ſhe not have me think, I have a precious ſoul, as well as ſhe?—If ſhe thinks my ſalvation hopeleſs, what a *devil* [Another exceptionable word!] does ſhe propoſe to reform me for?—So I have not an ardent expreſſion left me.

* *

WHAT can be done with a woman who is above flattery, and deſpiſes all praiſe but that which flows from the approbation of her own heart?

Well, Jack, thou ſeeſt it is high time to change my meaſures. I muſt run into the *pious* a little faſter than I had deſigned.

What a ſad thing would it be, were I, after all, to loſe her perſon, as well as her opinion! The only time that further acquaintance, and no blow ſtruck, nor ſuſpicion given, ever leſſened me in a lady's favour!—A curſed mortification!—'Tis certain I can have no pretence for holding her, if ſhe will go.—No ſuch thing as force to be uſed, or ſo much as hinted at: Lord ſend us ſafe at London!—That's all I have for it now: and yet it muſt be the leaſt part of my ſpeech.

But why will this admirable creature urge her deſtiny? Why will ſhe defy the power ſhe is abſolutely dependent upon? Why will ſhe ſtill wiſh to my face, that ſhe had never left her father's houſe? Why will ſhe deny me her company, till ſhe makes me loſe my patience, and lay myſelf open to her reſentment? And why, when ſhe is offended, does ſhe carry her indignation to the utmoſt length that a ſcornful beauty, in the *very height* of her *power* and *pride*, can go?

Is it prudent, thinkeſt thou, in *her* circumſtances, to tell me, *repeatedly* to tell me, That ſhe is every hour more and more diſſatisfied with herſelf and me? That I am not one, who improve upon her in my converſation and addreſs? [Couldſt *thou*, Jack, bear this from a captive!] That ſhe ſhall not be eaſy while ſhe is with me? That ſhe was thrown upon me by a perverſe fate? That ſhe knows better than to value herſelf upon my volubility? That if I think ſhe deſerves the compliments I make her, I may pride myſelf in thoſe arts, by which I have made a fool of ſo extraordinary a perſon? That ſhe ſhall never forgive herſelf for *meeting me*, nor me for *ſeducing* her away? [*Her very words*] That her regrets increaſe inſtead of diminiſh? That ſhe will take care of herſelf; and ſince her friends think it not worth while to purſue her, ſhe will be left to her own care? That I ſhall make Mrs. Sorlings's houſe more agreeable by my abſence?—And go to Berks, to town, or where-ever I will, [to the devil, I ſuppoſe] with all her heart?

The impolitick charmer!—To a temper ſo vindictive as ſhe thinks mine! To a free-liver, as ſhe believes me to

* See Page 307.

be,

be, who has her in his power! I was *before*, as thou knoweſt, balancing; now this ſcale, now that, the heavieſt. I only waited to ſee how *her* will would work, how *mine* would lead me on. Thou ſeeſt what bias hers takes—And wilt thou doubt that mine will be determined by it? Were not her faults, before this, numerous enough? Why will ſhe put me upon looking back?

I will ſit down to argue with myſelf by-and-by, and thou ſhalt be acquainted with the reſult.

If thou didſt but know, if thou hadſt but beheld, what an abject ſlave ſhe made me look like!—I had given myſelf high airs; as *ſhe* called them: but they were airs that ſhewed my love for her; that ſhewed I could not live out of her company. But ſhe took me down with a vengeance! She made me look about me. So much advantage had ſhe over me; ſuch ſevere turns upon me; by my ſoul, Jack, I had hardly a word to ſay for myſelf. I am aſhamed to tell thee, what a poor creature ſhe made me look like! But I could have told her ſomething that would have humbled her pretty pride at the inſtant, had ſhe been in a *proper* place, and *proper* company about her.

To ſuch a place then—and where ſhe cannot fly me—And *then* to ſee how my will works, and what can be done by the *amorous ſee-ſaw*; now humble; now proud; now expecting, or demanding; now ſubmitting, or acquieſcing—till I have tried reſiſtance.

But theſe hints are at preſent enough. I may further explain myſelf as I go along; and as I confirm or recede in my future motions. If ſhe *will* revive paſt diſobligations! If ſhe *will*—But no more, no more, as I ſaid, *at preſent*, of threatenings.

LETTER XIII.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

IN CONTINUATION.

AND do I not ſee that I ſhall need nothing but patience, in order to have all power with me? For what ſhall we ſay, if all theſe complaints of a character wounded; theſe declarations of encreaſing regrets for meeting me; of reſentments never to be got over for my *ſeducing* her away; theſe angry commands to leave her:—what ſhall we ſay, if all were to mean nothing but MATRIMONY? And what if my forbearing to enter upon that ſubject come out to be the true cauſe of her petulance and uneaſineſs?

I had once before played about the ſkirts of the irrevocable obligation; but thought myſelf obliged to ſpeak in clouds, and to run away from the ſubject, as ſoon as ſhe took my meaning, leſt ſhe ſhould imagine it to be *ungenerouſly urged*, now ſhe was in ſome ſort in my power, as ſhe had forbid me beforehand, to touch upon it, till I were in a ſtate of viſible reformation, and till a reconciliation with her friends were probable. But now, out-argued, out-talented, and puſhed ſo vehemently *to leave* one whom I had no good pretence to *hold*, if ſhe *would* go; and who could ſo eaſily, if I had given her cauſe to doubt, have thrown herſelf into other protection, or have returned to Harlowe Place and Solmes; I ſpoke out upon the ſubject, and offered reaſons, although with infinite doubt and heſitation, [*leſt ſhe ſhould be offended at me*, Belford!] why ſhe ſhould aſſent to the legal tie, and make me the happieſt of men. And O how the mantle cheek, the downcaſt eye, the ſilent, yet trembling lip, and the heaving boſom, a ſweet collection of heightened beauties, gave evidence, that the tender was not mortally offenſive!

'Charming creature!' thought I, '[*But I charge thee, that thou let not any of thy ſex know my exultation**] Is it ſo *ſoon* come to this?—Am I *already* lord of the deſtiny of a Clariſſa Harlowe?—Am I *already* the reformed man thou reſolvedſt I *ſhould* be, before I had the *leaſt* encouragement given me? Is it thus, that *the more thou knoweſt me, the leſs thou ſeeſt reaſon to approve of me?*—And can art and deſign enter into a breaſt ſo celeſtial? To baniſh me from thee,

* Mr. Lovelace might have ſpared this caution on this occaſion, ſince many of the ſex [We mention it with regret] who on the firſt publication had read thus far, and even to the lady's firſt eſcape, have been readier to cenſure her for over-niceneſs, as we have obſerved in a former note, Page 304, than him for artifices and exultations not leſs cruel and ungrateful, than ungenerous and unmanly.

'to

'to inſiſt ſo rigorouſly upon my abſence, in order to bring me cloſer to 'thee, and make the bleſſing dear?—'Well do *thy* arts juſtify *mine*; and 'encourage me to let looſe my plotting 'genius upon thee.

'But let me tell thee, charming 'maid, if thy wiſhes are at all to be 'anſwered, that thou haſt yet to account to me for thy reluctance to go 'off with me, at a criſis when thy going off was neceſſary to avoid being 'forced into the nuptial fetters with a 'wretch, that were he not thy averſion, thou wert no more honeſt to thy 'own merit, than to me.

'I am *accuſtomed* to be preferred, let 'me tell thee, by thy equals in rank 'too, though thy inferiors in merit; 'but who is not ſo? And ſhall I marry 'a woman, who has given me reaſon 'to doubt the preference ſhe has for 'me?

'No, my deareſt love, I have too 'ſacred a regard for thy *injunctions*, to 'let them be broken through, even by 'thyſelf. Nor will I take in thy full 'meaning by bluſhing ſilence only. 'Nor ſhalt thou give me room to 'doubt, whether it be neceſſity or love, 'that inſpires this condeſcending impulſe.'

Upon theſe principles, what had I to do, but to conſtrue her ſilence into contemptuous diſpleaſure?-And I begged her pardon for making a motion, which I had ſo much *reaſon* to fear would offend her: for the future *I would pay a ſacred* regard to her *previous injunctions*, and prove to her by all my conduct the truth of that obſervation, that true love is always fearful of offending.

'And what could the lady ſay to 'this?' methinks thou aſkeſt.

Say!—Why ſhe looked vexed, diſconcerted, teazed; was at a loſs, as I thought, whether to be more angry with herſelf, or with me. She turned about, however, as if to hide a ſtarting tear; and drew a ſigh into two or three but juſt audible quavers, trying to ſuppreſs it, and withdrew—leaving me maſter of the field.

Tell me not of politeneſs: tell me not of generoſity; tell me not of compaſſion—Is ſhe not a match for me? *More* than a match? Does ſhe not outdo me at every fair weapon? Has ſhe not made me doubt her love? Has ſhe not taken officious pains to declare that ſhe was not averſe to Solmes for any reſpect ſhe had to me? and her ſorrow for putting herſelf out of *his* reach; that is to ſay, for meeting me?

Then what a triumph would it be to the *Harlowe pride*, were I now to marry this lady? A family beneath my own! No one in it worthy of an alliance with, but her! My own eſtate not contemptible! Living within the bounds of it, to avoid dependence upon *their* betters, and obliged to no man living! My expectations ſtill ſo much *more* conſiderable! My perſon, my talents—not to be deſpiſed, ſurely—Yet rejected by them with ſcorn. Obliged to carry on an underhand addreſs to their daughter, when two of the moſt conſiderable families in the kingdom have made overtures, which I have declined, partly for her ſake, and partly becauſe I never will marry; if *ſhe* be not the perſon. To be forced to *ſteal* her away; not only from *them*, but from *herſelf!* and muſt I be brought to implore forgiveneſs and reconciliation from the Harlowes?—Beg to be acknowledged as the *ſon* of a gloomy tyrant; whoſe only boaſt is his riches? As a *brother* to a wretch, who has conceived immortal hatred to me; and to a ſiſter who was beneath my attempts, or I would have had her *in my own way*, and that with a tenth part of the trouble and pains that her ſiſter has coſt me; and, finally, as a *nephew* to uncles, who value themſelves upon their *acquired* fortunes, would inſult me as creeping to them on that account?—Forbid it the blood of the Lovelaces, that your *laſt*, and, let me ſay, not the *meaneſt* of your ſtock, ſhould thus creep, thus fawn, thus lick the duſt, for a WIFE!

Proceed anon.

LETTER XIV.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

IN CONTINUATION.

BUT is it not the divine CLARISSA [*Harlowe* let me not ſay; my ſoul ſpurns them all but her] whom I am thus by application threatening?—If virtue be the true nobility, how is ſhe ennobled, and how ſhould an alliance with

with her ennoble, were not contempt due to the family from which she sprung and prefers to me!

But again, let me stop.—Is there not something wrong, *has* there not been something wrong, in this divine creature? And will not the reflections upon that wrong* (what though it may be construed in *my favour?*) make me unhappy, when *novelty* has lost it's charms, and when, mind and person, she is all my own? Libertines are nicer, if *at all* nice, than other men. They seldom meet with the stand of virtue in the women whom they attempt. And by the frailty of those they have triumphed over, they judge of all the rest. *Importunity* and *opportunity* no woman is proof against, especially from a persevering lover, who knows how to suit temptations to inclinations: this, thou knowest, is a prime article of the rake's creed.

'And what!' (methinks thou askest with surprize) 'Dost thou question 'this most admirable of women?—'The virtue of a CLARISSA dost thou 'question?'

I do not, I dare not question it. My reverence for her will not let me *directly* question it. But let me, in my turn, ask thee—Is not, may not her virtue be founded rather in *pride* than in *principle?* Whose daughter is she?—And is she not a *daughter?* If impeccable, how came she by her impeccability? The pride of setting an example to her sex has run away with her hitherto, and may have made her till *now* invincible. But is not that pride abated? What may not both *men* and *women* be brought to do, *in a mortified state?* What mind is superior to calamity? Pride is perhaps the principal bulwark of female virtue. Humble a woman, and may she not be *effectually* humbled?

Then who says, Miss Clarissa Harlowe is the paragon of virtue?—Is virtue itself?

'All who know her, and have heard 'of her,' it will be answered.

Common bruit!—Is virtue to be established by common bruit only?—Has her virtue ever been *proved?*—Who has dared to try her virtue?

I told thee, I would sit down to argue with myself; and I have drawn myself into argumentation before I was aware.

Let me enter into a strict discussion of this subject.

I know how ungenerous an appearance what I *have* said, and what I have *farther* to say, on this topick, will have from *me*: but am I not bringing virtue to the touchstone, with a view to exalt it, if it come out to be proof?—Avaunt then, for one moment, all consideration that may arise from a weakness which some would miscall *gratitude*; and is oftentimes the corrupter of a heart not ignoble!

To the test then—And I will bring this charming creature to the *strictest* test, that all the sex, who may be shewn any passages in my letters, [And I know thou cheerest the hearts of all thy acquaintance with such detached parts of mine, as tend not to dishonour characters, or reveal names: and this gives me an appetite to oblige thee by *interlardment*] *that all the sex*, I say, may see what they *ought to be*; what is *expected* from them; and if they have to deal with a person of reflection and punctilio, [of *pride*, if thou wilt] how careful they ought to be, by a regular and uniform conduct, not to give him cause to think lightly of them for favours granted, which may be interpreted into *natural weakness*. For is not a wife the keeper of a man's honour? And do not her faults bring more disgrace upon a husband, than even upon herself?

It is not for nothing, Jack, that I have disliked the life of shackles.

To the test then, as I said, since now I have the question brought home to me, whether I am to have a wife? And whether she be to be a wife at the *first* or at the *second* hand?

I will proceed fairly. I will do the dear creature not only strict, but generous justice; for I will try her by her own judgment, as well as by our principles.

She blames herself for having corresponded with me, a man of free character; and one, indeed, whose *first* view it was, to draw her into this correspondence; and who succeeded in it, by means unknown to herself.

Now, what were her inducements to

* The particular attention of such of the fair-sex as are more apt to read for the sake of amusement, than instruction, is requested to this letter of Mr. Lovelace.

this

this correſpondence? If not what her niceneſs makes her *think* blame-worthy, why does ſhe blame herſelf?

Has ſhe been *capable* of error? Of perſiſting in that error?

Whoever was the *tempter*, that is not the thing; nor what the *temptation*. The *fact*, the *error*, is now before us.

Did ſhe perſiſt in it againſt parental prohibition?

She owns ſhe did.

Was a daughter ever known who had higher notions of the filial duty, of the parental authority?

Never.

What muſt be thoſe inducements, how ſtrong, that were *too ſtrong* for duty, in a daughter ſo *dutiful?*—What muſt *my* thoughts have been of theſe inducements, what *my* hopes built upon them, *at the time*, taken in this light?

Well, but it will be ſaid, that her principal view was, to prevent miſchief between her brother and her other friends, and the man vilely inſulted by them all.

But why ſhould *ſhe* be more concerned for the ſafety of others, than they were for their own? And had not the *rencounter* then happened? Was a perſon of virtue to be prevailed upon to break through her *apparent*, her *acknowledged* duty, upon *any* conſideration? And if not, was ſhe to be ſo prevailed upon to prevent an *apprehended* evil only?

'Thou, Lovelace, the tempter,' (thou wilt again break out and ſay) 'to be 'the accuſer!'

But I am *not* the accuſer. I am the arguer only, and, in my heart, all the time acquit and worſhip the divine creature. But let me, nevertheleſs, examine, whether the acquittal be owing to her *merit*, or to my *weakneſs*—Weakneſs the true name for love!

But ſhall we ſuppoſe another motive?—And that is LOVE; a motive which all the world will excuſe her for. But let me tell all the world that do, *not* becauſe they *ought*, but becauſe all the world is apt to be miſled by it.

Let LOVE then be the motive—Love of *whom?*

A *Lovelace*, is the anſwer.

Is there but *one* Lovelace in the world? May not *more* Lovelaces be attracted by ſo fine a figure? By ſuch exalted qualities? It was her character that drew me to her; and it was her beauty and good ſenſe, that rivetted my chains: and now all together make me think her a ſubject worthy of my attempts; worthy of my ambition.

But has ſhe had the candour, the openneſs, to *acknowledge* that love?

She has not.

Well, then, if love be at the bottom, is there not another fault lurking beneath the ſhadow of that love?—Has ſhe not *affectation?*—Or is it *pride of heart?*

And what reſults?—Is then the divine Clariſſa capable of *loving* a man whom ſhe ought *not* to love? And is ſhe capable of *affectation?* And is her virtue founded in *pride?*—And, if the anſwer to theſe queſtions be affirmative, muſt ſhe not then be a *woman?*

And can ſhe keep this love at bay? Can ſhe make *him*, who has been accuſtomed to triumph over other women, tremble? Can ſhe conduct herſelf, as to make him, at times, queſtion whether ſhe loves *him* or *any* man; yet not have the requiſite command over the paſſion itſelf in ſteps of the higheſt conſequence to her honour, as *ſhe* thinks, [*I am trying her*, Jack, *by her own thoughts*] but ſuffer herſelf to be provoked to promiſe to abandon her father's houſe, and go off with him, knowing his character; and even conditioning not to marry till improbable and remote contingencies were to come to paſs? What though the provocations were ſuch as would juſtify any other woman; yet was a CLARISSA to be ſuſceptible to provocations which ſhe thinks *herſelf* highly cenſureable for being ſo much moved by?

But let us ſee the dear creature reſolved to revoke her promiſe; yet *meeting* her lover; a bold and intrepid man, who was more than once before diſappointed by her; and who comes, as ſhe knows, prepared to expect the fruits of her appointment, and reſolved to carry her off. And let us ſee him actually carrying her off; and having her at his mercy—May there not be, I repeat, *other* Lovelaces; other *like* intrepid perſevering enterprizers; although they may not go to work in the ſame way?

And has then a CLARISSA (herſelf her judge) failed?—In ſuch *great* points failed?—And may ſhe not *further* fail?—Fail in the *greateſt* point, to which all the other points, in which ſhe *has* failed, have but a natural tendency?

Nor ſay thou, that virtue, in the eye of

of Heaven, is as much a *manly* as a *womanly* grace. By virtue in this place I mean chaſtity, and to be ſuperior to temptation; my Clariſſa out of the queſtion. Nor aſk thou, Shall the man be guilty, yet expect the woman to be guiltleſs, and even unſuſpectable? Urge thou not theſe arguments, I ſay, ſince the wife, by a failure, may do much more injury to the huſband, than the huſband can do to the wife; and not only to her huſband, but to all his family, by obtruding another man's children into his poſſeſſions, perhaps to the excluſion of (at leaſt to a participation with) his own; he believing them all the time to be his. In the eye of Heaven, therefore, the ſin *cannot* be equal. Beſides I have read in ſome places *that the woman was made for the man*, not *the man for the woman*. Virtue then is leſs to be diſpenſed with in the woman than in the man.

'Thou, Lovelace,' (methinks ſome better man than thyſelf will ſay) 'to 'expect ſuch perfection in a woman!'

'Yes, I,' may I anſwer. Was not the great Cæſar a great rake as to women? Was he not called, by his very ſoldiers, on one of his triumphant entries into Rome, *The bald-pated lecher?* And warning given of him to the *wives*, as well as to the daughters, of his fellow-citizens? Yet did not Cæſar repudiate his wife for being only in company with Clodius, or rather becauſe Clodius, though by ſurprize upon her, was found in hers? And what was the reaſon he gave for it?—It was this, (though a rake himſelf, as I have ſaid) and only this—*The wife of Cæſar muſt not be ſuſpected!*

Cæſar was not a prouder man than Lovelace.

Go to then, Jack; nor ſay, nor let any-body ſay, in thy hearing, that Lovelace, a man valuing himſelf upon his anceſtry, is ſingular in his expectations of a wife's purity, though not pure himſelf.

As to my CLARISSA, I own, that I hardly think there ever was ſuch an angel of a woman. But has ſhe not, as above, already taken ſteps, which ſhe herſelf condemns? Steps, which the world and her own family did not think her *capable* of taking? And for which her own family will not forgive her?

Nor think it ſtrange, that I refuſe to hear any-thing pleaded in behalf of a ſtandard virtue, from high *provocations*. Are not provocations and temptations the teſts of virtue? A ſtandard virtue muſt not be allowed to be *provoked* to deſtroy or annihilate itſelf.

May not then the ſucceſs of him, who could carry her *thus far*, be allowed to be an encouragement for him to try to carry her *farther?* It is but to try. Who will be afraid of a trial for this divine creature? Thou knoweſt, that I have more than once, twice, or thrice, put to the fiery trial young women of name and character; and never yet met with one who held out a month; nor indeed ſo long as could puzzle my invention. I have concluded againſt the whole ſex upon it. And now, if I have not found a virtue that cannot be corrupted, I will ſwear that there is not one ſuch in the whole ſex. Is not then the whole ſex concerned that this trial ſhould be made? And who is it that knows this lady, that would not ſtake upon her head the honour of the whole?—Let her who would refuſe it, come forth, and deſire to ſtand in her place.

I muſt aſſure thee, that I have a prodigious high opinion of virtue; as I have of all thoſe graces and excellences, which I have not been able to attain myſelf. Every free-liver would not *ſay* this, nor *think* thus—Every argument he uſes, condemnatory of his own actions, as ſome would think. But ingenuouſneſs was ever a ſignal part of my character.

Satan, whom thou mayeſt, if thou wilt, in this caſe, call my inſtigator, put the good man of old upon the ſevereſt trials. To his behaviour under theſe trials that good man owed his honour and his future rewards. An innocent perſon, if doubted, muſt wiſh to be brought to a fair and candid trial.

Rinaldo, indeed, in Arioſto, put the Mantua Knight's cup of trial from him, which was to be the proof of his wife's chaſtity *.—This was his argument for forbearing the experiment: 'Why 'ſhould I ſeek a thing I ſhould be loth 'to find? My wife is a woman. The 'ſex is frail. I cannot believe better of 'her than I do. It will be to my own 'loſs, if I find reaſon to think worſe.' But Rinaldo would not have refuſed the

* The ſtory tells us, that whoever drank of this cup, if his wife were chaſte, could drink without ſpilling; if otherwiſe, the contrary.

trial of the lady, before she *became* his wife, and when he might have found his account in detecting her.

For my part, I would not have put the cup from me, though married, had it been but in hope of finding reason to confirm my *good* opinion of my wife's honour; and that I might know whether I had a snake or a dove in my bosom.

To my point—What must that virtue be, which will not stand a trial?—What that woman, who would wish to shun it?

Well, then, a trial seems necessary for the *further* establishment of the honour of so excellent a creature.

And who shall put her to this trial? Who, but the man, who has, as she thinks, already induced her in *lesser* points, to swerve?—And this for her *own sake* in a double sense—Not only, as he has been able to make *some* impression, but as she *regrets* the impression made; and so may be presumed to be guarded against his further attempts.

The situation she is at present in, it must be confessed, is a disadvantageous one to her: but if she overcome, that will redound to her honour.

Shun not, therefore, my dear soul, further trials, nor hate me for making them.—For what woman can be said to be virtuous till she has been tried?

Nor is *one* effort, *one* trial, to be sufficient. Why? Because a woman's heart may be at one time *adamant*, at another *wax*—As I have often experienced. And so, no doubt, hast thou.

'A fine time of it,' methinks thou sayest, 'would the women have, if they 'were all to be tried!'

But, Jack, I am not for that neither. Though I am a rake, I am not a rake's friend; except thine and company's.

And be this one of the morals of my tedious discussion—Let the little rogues who would not be *put to the question*, as I may call it, chuse accordingly. Let them prefer to their favour good honest sober fellows, who have not been used to play dogs tricks: who will be willing to take them as they *offer*; and who being tolerable themselves, are not suspicious of others.

'But what,' methinks thou askest, 'is 'to become of the lady, if she fail?'

'What?—Why will she not, *if once* 'subdued, be *always subdued?*' And, ther of our libertine maxims. And what an immense pleasure to a marriage-hater, what rapture to thought, to be able to prevail upon such a woman as Miss Clarissa Harlowe to live with him, without *real* change of name!

But if she resist—If nobly she stand her trial!—

Why then I will marry her; and bless my stars for such an angel of a wife.

But will she not hate thee?—will she not refuse—

No, no, Jack!—Circumstanced and situated as we are, I am not afraid of that. And hate me! Why should she hate the man who loves her upon proof?

And then for a little hint at *reprisal*—Am I not justified in my resolutions of trying *her* virtue; who is resolved, as I may say, to try *mine?* Who has declared, that she will not marry me, till she has hopes of my reformation?

And now, to put an end to this sober argumentation, wilt thou not thyself (whom I have supposed an advocate for the lady, because I know that Lord M. has put thee upon using the interest he thinks thou hast in me, to persuade me to enter the pale; *wilt thou not thyself*) allow me to try, if I cannot awaken the *woman* in her?—To try, if she, with all that glowing symmetry of parts, and that full bloom of vernal graces, by which she attracts every eye, be really inflexible as to the grand article?

Let me begin then, as opportunity presents—I will; and watch her every step to find one sliding one; her every moment, to find the moment critical. And the rather, as she spares not me, but takes every advantage that offers, to puzzle and plague me; nor expects nor thinks me to be a good man.

If she be a *woman*, and *love* me, I shall surely catch her once tripping: for love was ever a traitor to it's harbourer; and love *within*, and I *without*, she will be *more* than woman, as the poet says, or I *less* than man, if I succeed not.

Now, Belford, all is out. The lady is mine; shall be *more* mine. Marriage, I see, is in my power, now *she* is so. Else perhaps it had not. If I can have her *without* marriage, who can blame me for trying? If *not*, great will be her glory, and my future confidence. And well will she merit the sacrifice I shall make her of my liberty; and from all her sex honours next to divine, for giv-

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ing a proof, that there was once a woman whose virtue no trials, no stratagems, no temptations, even from the man she hated not, could overpower.

Now wilt thou see all my circulation: as in a glass wilt thou see it.—CABALA, however, is the word*; nor let the secret escape thee even in thy dreams.

Nobody doubts, that she is to be my wife! Let her pass for such, when I give the word. Mean time, reformation shall be my stalking-horse; some one of the women in London, if I can get her thither, my bird. And so much for this time.

LETTER XV.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

[IN ANSWER TO LETTERS V. XI.]

DO not be so much concerned, my dearest friend, at the bickerings between my mother and me. We love one another dearly notwithstanding. If my mother had not me to find fault with, she must find fault with somebody else. And as to me, I am a very saucy girl; and were there not this occasion, there would be some other, to shew it.

You have heard me *say*, that this was always the case between us. You could not *otherwise* have known it. For when *you* was with us, you harmonized us both; and indeed I was always more afraid of you than of my mother. But then that awe is accompanied with love. Your reproofs, as I have always found, are so charmingly mild and instructive; so evidently calculated to improve, and not to provoke; that a generous temper must be amended by them. But here now, mind my good mamma, when you are not with us—'*You* shall, *I tell you*, '*Nancy*. *I will* have *it so*. *Don't* I '*know best*; *I won't be disobeyed*.' How can a daughter of spirit bear such language; such looks too with the language; and not have a longing mind to disobey?

Don't advise me, my dear, to subscribe to my mother's prohibition of correspondence with you. She has no reason for it. Nor would she of her own judgment have prohibited it. That odd old ambling soul your uncle, (whose visits are frequenter than ever) instigated by your malicious and selfish brother and sister, is the occasion. And they only have borrowed my mother's lips, at the distance they are from you, for a sort of speaking-trumpet for them. The prohibition, once more I say, cannot come from her heart: but if it did, is so much danger to be apprehended from my continuing to write to one of my own sex, as if I wrote to one of the other? Don't let dejection and disappointment and the course of oppression which you have run through, weaken your mind, my dearest creature; and make you see inconveniences, where there possibly cannot be any. If *your* talent is *scribbling*, as you call it; so is *mine*—And I will scribble on, at all opportunities; and to you; let them say what they will. Nor let your letters be filled with the self-accusations you mention: there is no cause for them. I wish, that your Anna Howe, who continues in her mother's house, were but half so good as Miss Clarissa Harlowe, who has been driven out of her father's.

I will say nothing upon your letter to your sister till I see the effect it will have. You hope, you tell me, that you shall have your money and cloaths sent you, notwithstanding my opinion to the contrary—I am sorry to have it to acquaint you, that I have just now heard, that they have sat in council upon your letter; and that your mother was the only person who was for sending you your things; and was over-ruled. I charge you, therefore, to accept of my offer, as by my last: and give me particular directions for what you want, that I can supply you with besides.

Don't set your thought so much upon a reconciliation, as to prevent your laying hold of any handsome opportunity to give yourself a protector; such a one as the man will be, who, I imagine, husband-like, will let nobody insult you but himself.

What could he mean, by letting slip such a one as that you mention? I don't know how to blame you; for how could you go beyond silence and blushes, when the foolish fellow came with his

* This word, whenever used by any of these gentlemen, was agreed to imply an inviolable secret.

obſervances of the reſtrictions which you laid him under when in another ſituation? But, as I told you above, you really ſtrike people into awe. And, upon my word, you did not ſpare him.

I repeat what I ſaid in my laſt, that you have a very nice part to act; and I will add, that you have a mind that is much too delicate for your part. But when the lover is exalted, the lady muſt be humbled. He is naturally proud and ſaucy. I doubt, you muſt engage his *pride*, which he calls his *honour*: and that you muſt throw off a little more of the veil. And I would have you reſtrain your wiſhes before him, that you had not met him, and the like. What ſignifies wiſhing, my dear? He will not bear it. You can hardly expect that he will.

Nevertheleſs, it vexes me to the very bottom of my pride, that any wretch of that ſex ſhould be able to triumph over Clariſſa.

I cannot, however, but ſay, that I am charmed with your ſpirit. So much ſweetneſs, where ſweetneſs is requiſite; ſo much ſpirit, where ſpirit is called for—What a *true* magnanimity!

But I doubt, in your preſent circumſtances, you muſt endeavour after a little more of the reſerve, in caſes where you are diſpleaſed with him, and palliate a little. That humility which he puts on when you riſe upon him, is not natural to him.

Methinks I ſee the man heſitating, and looking like the fool you paint him, under your corrective ſuperiority!—But he is not a fool. Don't put him upon mingling reſentment with his love.

You are very ſerious, my dear, in the firſt of the two letters before me, in relation to Mr. Hickman and me; and in relation to my mother and me. But as to the latter, you muſt not be too grave. If we are not well together at one time, we are not ill together at another. And while I am able to make her ſmile in the midſt of the moſt angry fit ſhe ever fell into on the preſent occaſion, (though ſometimes ſhe would not if ſhe could help it) it is a very good ſign; a ſign that diſpleaſure can never go deep, or be laſting. And then a kind word, or kind look, to her favourite Hickman, ſets the one into raptures, and the other in tolerable humour, at any time.

But your caſe pains me at heart; and with all my levity, *both* the good folks muſt ſometimes partake of that pain; nor will it be over, as long as you are in a ſtate of uncertainty; and eſpecially as I was not able to prevail for that protection for which you would have prevented the unhappy ſtep, the neceſſity for which we both, with ſo much reaſon, deplore.

I have only to add, (and yet it is needleſs to tell you) that I am, and will ever be, *your affectionate friend and ſervant*,

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XVI.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

YOU tell me, my dear, that my cloaths and the little ſum of money I left behind me, will not be ſent me.—But I will ſtill hope. It is yet early days. When their paſſions ſubſide, they will better conſider of the matter; and eſpecially as I have my ever dear and excellent mother for my friend in this requeſt. O the ſweet indulgence! How has my heart bled, and how does it ſtill bleed for her!

You adviſe me not to depend upon a reconciliation. I do not, I cannot depend upon it. But, nevertheleſs, it is the wiſh next my heart. And as to this man, what can I do? You ſee, *that marriage is not abſolutely in my own power*, if I were *inclined* to prefer it to the trial which I think I ought to have principally in view to make for a reconciliation.

You ſay, he is proud and inſolent—Indeed he is. But can it be your opinion, that he intends to humble me down to the level of his mean pride?

And what mean you, my dear friend, when you ſay, that I muſt throw off a *little more of the veil?*—Indeed I never knew that I wore one. Let me aſſure you, that if I ſee any-thing in Mr. Lovelace that looks like a deſign to humble me, his inſolence ſhall never make me diſcover a weakneſs unworthy of a perſon diſtinguiſhed by your friendſhip; that is to ſay, unworthy either of my *ſex*, or of my *former ſelf*.

But I hope, as I am out of all other protection, that he is not capable of mean or *low* reſentments. If he has had any

any extraordinary trouble on my account, may he not thank himself for it? He may; and lay it, if he pleases, to his *character*; which, as I have told him, gave at least a *pretence* to my brother against him. And then, did I ever make him any promises? Did I ever profess a love for him? Did I ever wish for the continuance of his address? Had not my brother's violence precipitated matters, would not my indifference to him in all likelihood (as I designed it should) have tired out his proud spirit*, and made him set out for London, where he used chiefly to reside? And if he *had*, would there not have been an end of all his pretensions and hopes? For no encouragement had I given him: nor did I then correspond with him. Nor, believe me, should I have begun to do so—the fatal rencounter not having then happened; which drew me in afterwards for others sakes, (fool that I was!) and not for my own. And can you think, or can *he*, that even this but temporarily-intended correspondence (which, by the way, my mother† connived at) would have ended thus, had I not been driven on one hand, and teazed on the other, to continue it; the occasion which had at first induced it, continuing? What pretence then has he, were I to be absolutely in his power, to avenge himself on me, for the faults of others; and through which I have suffered more than he? It cannot—cannot be, that I should have cause to apprehend him to be so ungenerous, so bad, a man.

You bid me not be concerned at the bickerings between your mother and you. Can I avoid concern, when those bickerings are on my account? That they are raised (instigated shall I say?) by my uncle, and my other relations, surely must add to my concern.

But I must observe, perhaps too critically for the state my mind is in at present, that the very sentences you give from your mother, as so many *imperatives*, which you take amiss, are very severe reflections upon yourself. For instance—'*You* shall, *I tell you, Nancy*,' implies that you had disputed her will—And so of the rest.

And further let me observe, with respect to what you say, that there cannot be the same reason for a prohibition of correspondence with me, as there was of mine with Mr. Lovelace; that I thought as little of bad consequences from my correspondence with him at the time, as you can do from yours with me, now. But if *obedience be a duty*, the *breach* of it is the *fault*, however circumstances may differ. Surely there is no merit in setting up our own judgment against the judgments of our parents. And if it be punishable so to do, I have been severely punished; and that is what I warned you of, from my own dear experience.

Yet, God forgive me! I advise thus against myself with very great reluctance: and, to say truth, have not strength of mind, at present, to decline it myself. But, if my occasion go not off, I will take it into farther consideration.

You give me very good advice in relation to this man; and I thank you for it. When you bid me be more upon the *reserve* with him in expressing my displeasure, perhaps I may try for it: but to *palliate*, as you call it, that, my dearest Miss Howe, cannot be done, by *your own*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LETTER XVII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

YOU may believe, my dear Miss Howe, that the circumstance of the noise and outcry within the garden-door, on Monday last, gave me no small uneasiness, to think that I was in the hands of a man, who could, by such vile premeditation, lay a snare to trick me out of myself, as I have so frequently called it.

Whenever he came in my sight, the thought of this gave me an indignation that made his presence disgustful to me; and the more, as I fancied I beheld in his face a triumph which reproached my weakness on that account; although, perhaps, it was only the same vivacity and placidness that generally sit upon his features.

I was resolved to task him upon this subject, the first time I could have patience to enter upon it with him. For, besides that it piqued me excessively

* See Vol. I. Page 17.

† See Vol. I. Page 18.

from

from the nature of the artifice, I expected shuffling and evasion, if he were guilty, that would have incensed me; and, if not confessedly guilty, such unsatisfactory declarations, as still would have kept my mind doubtful and uneasy; and would, upon every new offence that he might give me, sharpen my disgust to him.

I have had the opportunity I waited for; and will lay before you the result.

He was making his court to my good opinion in very polite terms, and with great seriousness lamenting that he had lost it; declaring, that he knew not how he had deserved to do so; attributing to me an indifference to him, that seemed, to his infinite concern, hourly to increase. And he besought me to let him know my whole mind, that he might have an opportunity either to confess his faults and amend them, or clear his conduct to my satisfaction, and thereby entitle himself to a greater share of my confidence.

I answered him with quickness—'Then, Mr. Lovelace, I will tell you 'one thing with a frankness, that is, 'perhaps, more suitable to *my* character, than to *yours*,' [*He hoped not, he said*] 'which gives me a very bad opinion of you, as a designing artful 'man.'

'I am all attention, Madam.'

'I never can think tolerably of you, 'while the noise and voice I heard at 'the garden-door, which put me into 'the terror you took so much advantage of, remains unaccounted for. 'Tell me fairly, tell me candidly, the 'whole of that circumstance; and of 'your dealings with that wicked Joseph Leman; and according to your 'explicitness in this particular, I shall 'form a judgment of your future professions.'

'I will, without reserve, my dearest 'life,' said he, 'tell you the whole; 'and hope that my sincerity in the relation will atone for any thing you 'may think wrong in the fact.

'I knew nothing,' *said he*, 'of this 'man, this Leman, and should have 'scorned a resort to so low a method as 'bribing the servant of any family to 'let me into the secrets of that family, 'if I had not detected him in attempting to corrupt a servant of mine, to 'inform him of all my motions, of all 'my supposed intrigues, and, in short, 'of every action of my private life, as 'well as of my circumstances and engagements; and this for motives too 'obvious to be dwelt upon.

'My servant told me of his offers, 'and I ordered him, unknown to the 'fellow, to let me hear a conversation 'that was to pass between them.

'In the midst of it, and just as he 'had made an offer of money for a particular piece of intelligence, promising more when procured, I broke 'in upon them, and by bluster, calling 'for a knife to cut off his ears (one of 'which I took hold of) in order to 'make a present of it, as I said, to his 'employers, I obliged him to tell me 'who they were.

'Your brother, Madam, and your 'uncle Antony, he named.

'It was not difficult when I had 'given him my pardon on naming them '(after I had set before him the enormity of the task he had undertaken, 'and the honourableness of my intentions to your dear self) to prevail 'upon him, by a larger reward, to 'serve me; since, at the same time, he 'might preserve the favour of your 'uncle and brother, as I desired to 'know nothing, but what related to 'myself and to you, in order to guard 'us both against the effects of an ill-'will, which all his fellow servants, 'as well as himself, as he acknowledged, thought undeserved.

'By this means, I own to you, Madam, I frequently turned his principals about upon a pivot of my own, 'unknown to themselves: and the fellow, who is always calling himself a '*plain man*, and boasting of his *conscience*, was the easier, as I condescended frequently to assure him of my honourable views; and as he knew that the use I made of his intelligence, in all 'likelihood, prevented fatal mischiefs.

'I was the more pleased with his 'services, as (let me acknowledge to 'you, Madam) they procured to you, 'unknown to yourself, a safe and uninterrupted egress (which perhaps 'would not otherwise have been continued to you so long as it was) to 'the garden and wood-house: for he 'undertook to them, to watch all your 'motions; and the more chearfully

'(for

'(for the fellow loves you) as it kept 'off the curiosity of others *.'

So, my dear, it comes out, that I *myself* was obliged to this deep contriver.

I sat in silent astonishment; and thus he went on:

'As to the circumstance, for which 'you think so hardly of me, I do freely 'confess, that having a suspicion that 'you would revoke your intention of 'getting away, and in that case apprehending that we should not have the 'time together that was necessary for 'that purpose; I had ordered him to 'keep off every-body he *could* keep off, 'and to be himself within view of the 'garden-door; for I was determined, 'if possible, to induce you to adhere 'to your resolution.'

'But pray, Sir,' interrupting him, 'how came you to apprehend that I 'should revoke my intention? I had indeed deposited a letter to that purpose; 'but you had it not: and how, as I had 'reserved to myself the privilege of a 'revocation, did you know, but I 'might have prevailed upon my friends, 'and so have revoked upon good 'grounds?'

'I will be very ingenuous, Madam —You had made me hope that if you 'changed your mind, you would give 'me a meeting to apprize me of the 'reasons for it. I went to the loose 'bricks, and I saw the letter there: 'and as I knew your friends were immoveably fixed in their schemes, I 'doubted not but the letter was to revoke or suspend your resolution; and 'probably to serve instead of a meeting 'too. I therefore let it lie, that if you '*did* revoke, you might be under the 'necessity of meeting me for the sake 'of the expectation you had given me: 'and as I came prepared, I was resolved, pardon me, Madam, whatever were your intentions, that you 'should not go back. Had I taken 'your letter, I must have been determined by the contents of it, for the 'present, at least: but not having received it, and you having reason to 'think I wanted not resolution, in a 'situation so desperate, to make your 'friends a personal visit, I depended 'upon the interview you had bid me 'hope for.'

'Wicked wretch!' said I; 'It is 'my grief, that I gave you opportunity to take so exact a measure of my 'weakness!—But *would* you have presumed to visit the family, had I not 'met you?'

'Indeed I would. I had some friends 'in readiness, who were to have accompanied me to them. And had 'your father refused to give me audience, I would have taken my friends 'with me to Solmes.'

'And what did you intend to do to 'Mr. Solmes?'

'Not the least hurt, had the man been 'passive.'

'But had he *not* been passive, as you 'call it, what would you have done to 'Mr. Solmes?'

He was loth, he said, to tell me—Yet not the least hurt to his *person*.

I repeated my question.

If he *must* tell me, he only proposed to carry off the *poor fellow*, and to hide him for a month or two. And this he would have done, let what would have been the consequence.

Was ever such a wretch heard of!—I sighed from the bottom of my heart; but bid him proceed from the part I had interrupted him at.

'I ordered the fellow, as I told you, 'Madam,' said he, 'to keep within 'view of the garden-door: and if he 'found any parley between us, and 'any-body coming (before you could 'retreat undiscovered) whose coming 'might be attended with violent effects, 'he should cry out; and this not only 'in order to save himself from their 'suspicions of him, but to give me 'warning to make off, and, if possible, 'to induce you (I own it, Madam) 'to go off with me, according to your 'own appointment. And I hope, all 'circumstances considered, and the danger I was in of losing you for ever, 'that the acknowledgment of *that* 'contrivance, or if you had *not* met 'me, *that* upon Solmes, will not procure me your hatred: for, had they 'come as *I* expected as well as *you*, 'what a despicable wretch had I been, 'could I have left you to the insults of 'a brother and others of your family, 'whose mercy was cruelty when they 'had *not* the pretence with which this 'detected interview would have furnished them!'

'What a wretch!' said I.—'But

* See Vol. II. p 250.

'if,

'if, Sir, taking your *own* account of 'this ſtrange matter to be fact, any-'body were coming, how happened it, 'that I ſaw only that man Leman (I '*thought* it was he) out of the door, 'and at a diſtance look after us?'

'Very lucky!' ſaid he, putting his hand firſt in one pocket, then in another—'I hope I have not thrown it 'away—It is, perhaps, in the coat I 'had on yeſterday—Little did I think 'it would be neceſſary to be produced—'But I love to come to a demonſtration 'whenever I can—I *may* be giddy—I '*may* be heedleſs. I *am* indeed—But 'no man, as to *you*, Madam, ever had 'a ſincerer heart.'

He then ſtepping to the parlour-door, called his ſervant to bring him the coat he had on yeſterday.

The ſervant did. And in the pocket, rumpled up as a paper he regarded not, he pulled out a letter, written by that Joſeph, dated Monday night; in which he begs pardon for crying out ſo ſoon —ſays, That his fears of being diſcovered to act on both ſides, had made him take the ruſhing of a little dog (that always follows him) through the phyllirea-hedge, for Betty's being at hand, or ſome of his maſters: and when he found his miſtake, he opened the door by his own key, (which the contriving wretch confeſſed he had furniſhed him with) and inconſiderately ran out in a hurry, to have apprized him that his crying out was owing to his fright only: and he added, that they were upon the hunt for me, by the time he returned *.

I ſhook my head—'Deep! deep! 'deep!' ſaid I, 'at the beſt!—O Mr. 'Lovelace! God forgive and reform 'you!—But you are, I ſee plainly '(upon the whole of your own ac-'count) a very artful, a very deſign-'ing man.'

'Love, my deareſt life, is ingeni-'ous. Night and day have I racked my 'ſtupid brain,' ['*O Sir,' thought I, 'not ſtupid! 'Twere well perhaps if it 'were.'] 'to contrive methods to pre-'vent the ſacrifice deſigned to be made 'of you, and the miſchief that muſt 'have enſued upon it: ſo little hold in 'your affections: ſuch undeſerved an-'tipathy from your friends: ſo much 'danger of loſing you for ever from '*both* cauſes. I have not had for the 'whole fortnight before laſt Monday, 'half an hour's reſt at a time. And 'I own to you, Madam, that I ſhould 'never have forgiven myſelf, had I 'omitted any contrivance or fore-'thought that would have prevented 'your return without me.'

Again I blamed myſelf for meeting him: and juſtly; for there were many chances to one, that I had *not* met him. And if I had not, all his fortnight's contrivances, as to me, would have come to nothing; and perhaps I might nevertheleſs have eſcaped Solmes.

Yet, had he reſolved to come to Harlowe Place with his friends, and been inſulted, as he certainly would have been, what miſchiefs might have followed!

But his reſolutions to run away with and to hide the poor Solmes for a month or ſo, O my dear! what a wretch have I let run away with *me*, inſtead of *Solmes!*

I aſked him, if he thought ſuch enormities as theſe, ſuch defiances of the laws of ſociety, would have paſſed unpuniſhed?

He had the aſſurance to ſay, with one of his uſual gay airs, That he ſhould by this means have diſappointed his enemies, and ſaved me from a forced marriage. He had no pleaſure in ſuch deſperate puſhes. Solmes he would not have *perſonally* hurt. He muſt have fled his country, for a time at leaſt: and, truly, if he had been obliged to do ſo, (as all his hopes of my favour muſt have been at an end) he would have had a fellow-traveller of his own ſex out of our family, whom I little thought of.

Was ever ſuch a wretch!—To be ſure he meant my brother!

'And ſuch, Sir,' ſaid I, in high reſentment, 'are the uſes you make of 'your corrupt intelligencer—'

'*My* corrupt intelligencer, Madam!' interrupted he. 'He is to this hour 'your brother's as well as mine. By 'what I have ingenuouſly told you, 'you may ſee who began this corrup-'tion. Let me aſſure you, Madam,

* See his letter to Joſeph Leman, Vol. II. No. L. towards the end, where he tells him, he would contrive for him a letter of this nature to copy.

'that

'that there are many free things which 'I have been guilty of as *reprizals*, in 'which I would not have been the *aggressor*.'

'All that I shall further say on this head, Mr. Lovelace, is this: that as 'this vile double-faced wretch has probably been the cause of great mischief on both sides, and *still* continues, as you own, his wicked practices, I think it would be but just, to have my friends apprized what a creature *he* is whom some of them encourage.'

'What you please, Madam, as to 'that—My service, as well as your 'brother's, is now almost over for him. 'The fellow has made a good hand of 'it. He does not intend to stay long 'in his place. He is now actually in treaty for an inn, which will do his 'business for life. I can tell you further, that he makes love to your sister's 'Betty: and that *by my advice*. They 'will be married when he is established. An innkeeper's wife is every 'man's mistress; and I have a scheme 'in my head to set some engines at work 'to make *her* repent her saucy behaviour to you to the last day of her 'life.'

'What a wicked schemer are you, 'Sir!—Who shall avenge upon you 'the still greater evils which you have 'been guilty of? I forgive Betty with 'all my heart. She was not my servant; and but too probably, in what 'she did, obeyed the commands of her 'to whom she owed duty, better than 'I obeyed those to whom I owed more.'

No matter for that, the wretch said: [*To be sure, my dear, he must design to make me afraid of him*] the decree was gone out—Betty must smart—Smart too by an act of her own choice. He loved, he said, to make bad people their own punishers.—'Nay, Madam, ex'cuse me; but if the fellow, if this 'Joseph, in *your* opinion, deserves 'punishment, mine is a complicated 'scheme; a man and his wife cannot 'well suffer separately; and it may come 'home to *him* too.'

I had no patience with him. I told him so, 'I see, Sir,' said I, 'I see, 'what a man I am with. Your *rattle* 'warns me of the *snake*.'—And away I flung; leaving him seemingly vexed, and in confusion.

LETTER XVIII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

MY plain-dealing with Mr. Lovelace, on seeing him again, and the free dislike I expressed to his ways, his manners, and his contrivances, as well as to his speeches, have obliged him to recollect himself a little. He will have it, that the menaces which he threw out just now against my brother and Mr. Solmes, are only the effect of an unmeaning pleasantry. He has too great a stake in his country, he says, to be guilty of *such* enterprizes as should lay him under a necessity of quitting it for ever. Twenty things, particularly, he says, he has suffered Joseph Leman to tell of him, that *were not*, and *could not* be true, in order to make himself formidable in some people's eyes, and this purely with a view to *prevent mischief*. He is unhappy, as far as he knows, in a quick invention; in hitting readily upon expedients; and many things are reported of him which he never said, and many which he never did, and others which he has only talked of, (as just now) and which he has forgot as soon as the words have passed his lips.

This may be so, in part, my dear. No one man so young could be so wicked as he has been reported to be. But such a man at the head of such wretches as he is said to have at his beck, all men of fortune and fearlessness, and capable of such enterprizes as I have unhappily found him capable of, what is not to be apprehended from him!

His carelessness about his character is one of his excuses: a very bad one. What hope can a woman have of a man who values not his reputation?—These gay wretches may, in mixed conversation, divert for an hour or so: but the man of probity, the man of virtue, is the man that is to be the partner for life. What woman, who could help it, would submit it to the courtesy of a wretch, who avows a disregard to all moral sanctions, whether he will perform his part of the matrimonial obligation, and treat her with tolerable politeness?

With these notions, and with these

reflections, to be thrown upon such a man as himself—Would to Heaven—But what avail wishes now?—To whom can I fly, if I would fly from him?

LETTER XIX.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

FRIDAY, APRIL 14.

NEVER did I hear of such a parcel of foolish toads as these Harlowes!—Why, Belford, the lady must fall, if every hair of her head were a guardian angel, unless they were to make a visible appearance for her, or, snatching her from me at unawares, would draw her after them into the starry regions.

All I had to apprehend, was, that a daughter so reluctantly carried off, would offer terms to her father, and would be accepted upon a mutual *concedence*; *they* to give up *Solmes*; *she* to give up *me*. And so I was contriving to do all I could to guard against the latter. But they seem resolved to perfect the work they have begun.

What stupid creatures are there in the world! This foolish brother not to know, that he who would be bribed to undertake a base thing by one, would be *over*-bribed to *retort* the baseness; especially when he could be put into the way to serve himself by both!—Thou, Jack, wilt never know one half of my contrivances.

He here relates the conversation between him and the lady (upon the subject of the noise and exclamations his agent made at the garden door) to the same effect as in the lady's letter, No. XVII. *and proceeds exulting:*

What a capacity for glorious mischief has thy friend!—Yet how near the truth all of it! The only deviation, my asserting that the fellow made the noises by *mistake*, and through *fright*, and not by *previous direction*: had she known the precise truth, her anger, to be so taken in, would never have let her forgive me.

Had I been a military hero, I should have made gunpowder useless; for I should have blown up all my adversaries by dint of stratagem, turning their own devices upon them.

But these fathers and mothers—Lord help 'em!—Were not the powers of nature stronger than those of discretion, and were not that busy *dea bona* to afford her genial aids, till tardy prudence qualified parents to *manage* their future offspring, how few people would have children!

James and Arabella may have *their* motives; but what can be said for a father acting as *this* father has acted? What for a mother? What for an aunt? What for uncles?—Who can have patience with such fellows and fellowesses?

Soon will the fair-one hear how high their foolish resentments run against her: and then will she, it is to be hoped, have a little more confidence in me. Then will I be jealous that she loves me not with the preference my heart builds upon. Then will I bring her to confessions of grateful love: and then will I kiss her when I please; and not stand trembling, as now, like a hungry hound, who sees a delicious morsel within his reach, (the froth hanging about his vermillion jaws) yet dares not leap at it for his life.

But I was *originally* a bashful mortal. Indeed I am bashful still with regard to this lady—Bashful, yet know the sex so well!—But that indeed is the *reason* that I know it so well:—for, Jack, I have had abundant cause, when I have looked into *myself*, by way of comparison with the *other* sex, to conclude, that a bashful man has a good deal of the soul of a woman; and so, like Tiresias, can tell what they think, and what they drive at, as well as themselves.

The modest ones and I, particularly, are pretty much upon a par. The difference between us is only, what they *think*, I *act*. But the immodest ones out-do the worst of us by a bar's length, both in thinking and acting.

One argument let me plead in proof of my assertion; that even we rakes love modesty in a woman; while the modest women as they are accounted (that is to say, the *slyest*) love, and generally prefer, an impudent man. Whence can this be, but from a likeness in nature? And this made the poet say, That every woman is a rake in her heart. It concerns them by their *actions*,

tions, to prove the contrary, if they can.

Thus have I read in some of the philosophers, *That no wickedness is comparable to the wickedness of a woman* *. Canst thou tell me, Jack, who says this! Was it Socrates? for he had the devil of a wife—Or who? Or is it Solomon?—*King* Solomon—Thou remembereſt to have read of ſuch a king, doſt thou not? SOL-O-MON, I learned, in my infant ſtate [My mother was a good woman] to anſwer, when aſked, '*Who was the wiſeſt man?*'—But my indulgent queſtioner never aſked me, How he came by the un-inſpired part of his wiſdom.

Come, come, Jack, you and I are not ſo very bad, could we but ſtop where we are.

He then gives the particulars of what paſſed between him and the lady on his menaces relating to her brother and Mr. Solmes, and of his deſign to puniſh Betty Barnes and Joſeph Leman.

LETTER XX.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

FRIDAY, APRIL 14.

I Will now give you the particulars of a converſation that has juſt paſſed between Mr. Lovelace and me; which I muſt call agreeable.

It began with his telling me, that he had juſt received intelligence, that my friends were on a ſudden come to a reſolution, to lay aſide all thoughts of purſuing me, or of getting me back: and that therefore he attended me to know my pleaſure; and what I would do, or have *him* do?

I told him, that I would have him leave me directly; and that, when it was known to every-body that I was abſolutely independent of him, it would paſs, that I had left my father's houſe becauſe of my brother's ill uſage of me: which was a plea that I might make with juſtice, and to the excuſe of my father, as well as of myſelf.

He mildly replied, that if we could be certain, that my relations would *adhere* to this their new reſolution, he could have no objection, ſince ſuch was my pleaſure: but, as he was well aſſured, that they had taken it only from apprehenſions, that a more *active* one might involve my brother (who had breathed nothing but revenge) in ſome fatal misfortune, there was too much reaſon to believe, that they would reſume their former purpoſe the moment they ſhould think they *ſafely* might.

'This, Madam,' ſaid he, 'is a riſque 'I cannot run. You would think it 'ſtrange if I could. And yet, as 'ſoon as I knew they had ſo given out, 'I thought it proper to apprize you of 'it, and to take your commands upon 'it.'

'Let me hear,' ſaid I, willing to try if he had any particular view, 'what *you* think moſt adviſeable?'

''Tis very eaſy to ſay, That if I 'durſt—*If I might not offend you*—If 'it were not to *break conditions that 'ſhall be inviolable with me.*'

'Say then, Sir, what you *would* 'ſay. I can approve or diſapprove, as 'I think fit.'

Had not the man a fine opportunity here to ſpeak out? He had. And thus he uſed it.

'To wave, Madam, what I *would* 'ſay till I have more courage to ſpeak 'out,' [*More courage—Mr. Lovelace more courage, my dear!*]—'I will only 'propoſe what I think will be moſt 'agreeable to *you*—Suppoſe, if *you 'chuſe not to go to Lady Betty's*, that 'you take a turn croſs the country to 'Windſor?'

'Why to Windſor?'

'Becauſe it is a pleaſant place: be-'cauſe it lies in the way either to Berk-'ſhire, to Oxford, or to London. '*Berkſhire*, where Lord M. is at pre-'ſent: *Oxford*, in the neighbourhood 'of which lives Lady Betty; *London*, 'whither you may retire at your plea-'ſure. Or, if you will *have* it ſo, 'whither I may go, you ſtaying at 'Windſor; and yet be within an eaſy 'diſtance of you, if any-thing ſhould 'happen, or if your friends ſhould 'change their new-taken reſolution.'

This propoſal, however, diſpleaſed me not. But I ſaid, My only objec-

* Mr. Lovelace is as much out in his conjecture of Solomon, as of Socrates. The paſſage is in Eccleſiaſticus, Chap. XXV.

tion was, the distance of Windsor from Miss Howe, of whom I should be glad to be always within two or three hours reach by a messenger, if possible.

If I had thoughts of any other place than Windsor or nearer to Miss Howe, he wanted but my commands, and would seek for proper accommodations: but, fix as I pleased, farther or nearer, he had servants, and they had nothing else to do but to obey me.

A grateful thing then he named to me—To send for my Hannah, as soon as I shall be fixed*; unless I would chuse one of the young gentlewomen *here* to attend me; both of whom, as I had acknowledged, were very obliging; and he knew I had generosity enough to make it worth their while.

This of Hannah, he might see, I took very well. I said, I had thoughts of sending for her, as soon as I got to more convenient lodgings. As to these young gentlewomen, it were pity to break in upon that usefulness which the whole family were of to each other: each having her proper part, and performing it with an agreeable alacrity: insomuch that I liked them all so well, that I could even pass my days among them were he to leave me; by which means the lodgings would be more convenient to me than now they were.

He need not repeat his objections to this place, he said: but as to going to Windsor, or wherever else I thought fit, or as to his personal attendance, or leaving me, he would assure me, (he very agreeably said) that I could propose nothing in which I thought my reputation, and even my *punctilio*, concerned, that he would not chearfully come into. And since I was so much taken up with my pen, he would instantly order his horse to be got ready, and would set out.

Not to be off my caution. 'Have 'you any acquaintance at Windsor?' said I.—'Know you of any conveni-'ent lodgings there?'

'Except the Forest,' replied he, 'where I have often hunted, I know 'the least of Windsor, of any place so 'noted and so pleasant. Indeed, I 'have not a single acquaintance there.'

Upon the whole, I told him, that I thought his proposal of Windsor not amiss; and that I would remove thither, if I could get a lodging only for myself, and an upper-chamber for Hannah; for that my stock of money was but small; as was easy to be conceived; and I should be very loth to be obliged to any-body. I added, that the sooner I removed the better; for that then he could have no objection to go to London, or Berkshire, as he pleased: and I should let every-body know my independence.

He again proposed himself, in very polite terms, for my banker. But I, as civilly, declined his offer.

This conversation was to be, all of it, in the main, agreeable. He asked, whether I would chuse to lodge in the town of Windsor, or out of it?

'As near the castle,' I said, 'as pos-'sible, for the convenience of going 'constantly to the publick worship.' An opportunity I had been long deprived of.

He should be very glad, he told me, if he could procure me accommodations in any one of the canons houses; which he imagined would be more agreeable to me than any other, on many accounts. And as he could depend upon my promise, never to have any other man but himself, on the condition to which he had so chearfully subscribed, he should be easy; since it was now his part, *in earnest*, to set about recommending himself to my favour, by the *only* way he knew it would be done. Adding, with a very serious air—'I am but a young man, Ma-'dam; but I have run a long course: 'let not your purity of mind incline 'you to despise me for the acknow-'ledgment. It is high time to be weary 'of it, and to reform; since, like So-'lomon, I can say, There is nothing 'new under the sun: but that it is my 'belief, that a life of virtue can afford 'such pleasures, on reflection, as will 'be for ever blooming, for ever new!'

I was agreeably surprized. I looked at him, I believe, as if I doubted my ears and my eyes. His aspect however became his words.

I expressed my satisfaction in terms so agreeable to him, that he said, he found a delight in this early dawning of a better day to him, and in *my* ap-

* See his reasons for proposing Windsor, Page 350, 351; and her Hannah, Page 352.

probation,

probation, which he had never received from the ſucceſs of the moſt favoured of his purſuits.

Surely, my dear, the man *muſt* be in earneſt. He could not have *ſaid* this; he could not have *thought* it, had he not. What followed made me ſtill readier to believe him.

'In the midſt of my wild vagaries,' ſaid he, 'I have ever preſerved a reverence for religion, and for religious men. I always called another cauſe, when any of my libertine companions, in purſuance of Lord Shafteſbury's teſt, (which is a part of the rake's creed, and what I may call *the wheſtſtone of infidelity*) endeavoured to turn the ſacred ſubject into ridicule. On this very account I have been called by good men of the clergy, who nevertheleſs would have it, that I was a *practical* rake, *the decent rake*: and indeed I had too much pride in my ſhame, to diſown the name of *rake*.

'This, Madam, I am the readier to confeſs, as it may give you hope, that the generous taſk of my reformation, which I flatter myſelf you will have the goodneſs to undertake, will not be ſo difficult a one as you may have imagined; for it has afforded me ſome pleaſure in my retired hours, when a temporary remorſe has ſtruck me for any-thing I have done amiſs, that I ſhould *one* day take delight in another courſe of life: for, unleſs we *can*, I dare ſay, no durable *good* is to be expected from the endeavour. Your example, Madam, muſt do all, muſt confirm all*.'

'The Divine Grace, or Favour, Mr. Lovelace, muſt do all, and confirm all. You know not how much you pleaſe me, that I can talk to you in this dialect.'

And I then thought of his generoſity to his pretty ruſtick; and of his kindneſs to his tenants.

'Yet, Madam, be pleaſed to remember one thing: reformation cannot be a *ſudden* work. I have infinite vivacity: it is that which runs away with me. Judge, deareſt Madam, by what I am going to confeſs, that I have a prodigious way to journey on, before a good perſon will think me tolerable; ſince, though I have read in ſome of our *perfectioniſts* enough to make a better man than myſelf either run into madneſs or deſpair about the grace you mention; yet I cannot enter into the meaning of the word, nor into the modus of it's operation. Let me not then be checked, when I mention *your* example for my *viſible* reliance; and inſtead of uſing ſuch words, till I can better underſtand them, ſuppoſe all the reſt included in the profeſſion of *that* reliance.'

I told him, that, although I was ſomewhat concerned at his expreſſion, and ſurprized at ſo much *darkneſs*, as (for want of another word) I would call it, in a man of his talents and learning; yet I was pleaſed with his ingenuouſneſs. I wiſhed him to encourage this way of thinking. I told him, that his obſervation, that no *durable* good was to be expected from any new courſe where there was not a *delight* taken in it, was juſt: but that the delight would follow by uſe.

And twenty things of this ſort I even preached to him; taking care, however, not to be tedious, nor to let my expanded heart give him a contracted or impatient blow. And, indeed, he took viſible pleaſure in what I ſaid, and even hung upon the ſubject, when I, to try him, once or twice, ſeemed ready to drop it: and proceeded to give me a moſt agreeable inſtance, that he could at times think both deeply and ſeriouſly.—Thus it was.

He was once, he ſaid, dangerouſly wounded in a duel, in the left-arm, baring it, to ſhew me the ſcar: that this (notwithſtanding a great effuſion of blood, it being upon an artery) was followed by a violent fever, which at laſt fixed upon his ſpirits; and *that* ſo obſtinately, that neither did *he* deſire life, nor his *friends* expect it. That, for a month together, his heart, as he thought, was ſo totally changed, that he deſpiſed his former courſes, and particularly that raſhneſs, which had brought him to the ſtate he was in, and his antagoniſt (who, however, was the aggreſſor) into a much worſe: that in this ſpace he had thoughts which at times ſtill give him pleaſure to reflect

* That he propoſes one day to reform, and that he has ſometimes good motions, ſee Vol. I. Page 108.

upon.

upon. And although these promising prospects changed, as he recovered health and spirits, yet he parted with them with so much reluctance, that he could not help shewing it in a copy of verses, *truly blank* ones, he said; some of which he repeated, and (advantaged by the grace which he gives to everything he repeats) I thought them very tolerable ones; the sentiments, however, much graver than I expected from him.

He has promised me a copy of the lines; and then I shall judge better of their merit; and so shall you. The tendency of them was, that, since sickness only gave him a proper train of thinking, and that his restored health brought with it a return of his evil habits, he was ready to renounce the gifts of nature for those of contemplation.

He farther declared, that although these good motions went off (as he had owned) on his recovery, yet he had better hopes now, from the influence of my example, and from the reward before him, if he persevered: and that he was the more hopeful that he should, as his present resolution was made in a full tide of health and spirits; and when he had nothing to wish for but perseverance, to entitle himself to my favour.

'I will not throw cold water, Mr. 'Lovelace,' said I, 'on a rising flame: 'but look to it! For I shall endeavour 'to keep you up to this spirit. I shall 'measure your value of me by this 'test: and I would have you bear 'those charming lines of Mr. Rowe 'for ever in your mind; you, who 'have, by your own confession, so 'much to repent of; and as the scar, 'indeed, you shewed me, will, in one 'instance, remind you to your dying 'day.'

The lines, my dear, are from the poet's Ulysses; you have heard me often admire them; and I repeated them to him.

'*Habitual* evils change not on a *sudden*;
'But many days must pass, and *many* sor-
'rows;
'Conscious remorse and anguish *must* be felt,
'To curb desire, to break the stubborn will,
'And work a second nature in the soul,
'Ere Virtue can resume the place she lost:
'Tis else DISSIMULATION.'

He had often read these lines, he said: but never *tasted* them before.—By his *soul*, (the unmortified creature swore) and as *he hoped to be saved*, he was *now* in earnest in his good resolutions. He had said, *before* I repeated these lines from Rowe, that habitual evils could not be changed on a *sudden*: but he hoped, he should not be thought a *dissembler*, if he were not enabled to *hold* his good purposes; since ingratitude and dissimulation were vices that of all others he abhorred.

'May you ever abhor them!' said I. 'They are the most odious of all vices.'

I hope, my dear Miss Howe, I shall not have occasion, in my future letters, to contradict these promising appearances. Should I have *nothing* on his side to combat with, I shall be very far from being happy, from the sense of my fault, and the indignation of all my relations.—So shall not fail of condign punishment for it, from my inward remorse on account of my forfeited character. But the least ray of hope could not dart in upon me, without my being willing to lay hold of the very first opportunity to communicate it to *you*, who take so generous a share in all my concerns.

Nevertheless, you may depend upon it, my dear, that these agreeable assurances, and hopes of his begun reformation, shall not make me forget my caution. Not that I think, at worst, any more than you, that he dare to harbour a thought injurious to my honour: but he is very various, and there is an *apparent*, and even an *acknowledged* unfixedness in his temper, which, at times, gives me uneasiness. I am resolved, therefore, to keep him at a distance from my person and my thoughts, as much as I can: for whether *all* men are or are not encroachers, I am sure Mr. Lovelace is one.

Hence it is, that I have always cast about, and will continue to cast about, what ends he may have in view from *this* proposal, or from *that* report. In a word, though hopeful of the *best*, I will always be fearful of the *worst*, in every-thing that admits of doubt. For it is better, in such a situation as mine, to apprehend without cause, than to subject myself to surprize for want of forethought.

Mr. Lovelace is gone to Windsor, having left two servants to attend me. He purposes to be back to-morrow.

I have

I have written to my aunt Hervey, to ſupplicate her intereſt in my behalf, for my cloaths, books, and money; ſignifying to her, That, if I may be reſtored to the favour of my family, and allowed a negative only, as to any man who may be propoſed to me, and be uſed like a daughter, a niece, and a ſiſter, I will ſtand by my offer to live ſingle, and ſubmit, as I ought, to a negative from my father. Intimating, nevertheleſs, That it were perhaps better, after the uſage I have received from my brother and ſiſter, that I may be allowed to be diſtant from them, as well for their ſakes as for my own, (meaning, as I ſuppoſe it will be taken, at my Dairy Houſe)—offering to take my father's directions, as to the manner I ſhall live in, the ſervants I ſhall have, and in every-thing that ſhall ſhew the dutiful ſubordination to which I am willing to conform.

My aunt will know by my letter to my ſiſter how to direct to me, if ſhe be permitted to favour me with a line.

I am equally earneſt *with her* in *this* letter, as I was with my *ſiſter* in *that* I wrote to *her*, to obtain for me a ſpeedy reconciliation, that I may not be further precipitated; intimating, That, by a timely lenity, all may paſs for a miſunderſtanding only, which, otherwiſe, will be thought equally diſgraceful to them, and to me; appealing to her for the neceſſity I was under to do what I did.

Had I owned, that I was over-reached, and forced away againſt my intention, might they not, as a proof of the truth of my aſſertion, have inſiſted upon my immediate return to them? And if I did *not* return, would they not have reaſon to ſuppoſe, that I had *now* altered my mind, (if ſuch were my mind) or had not the *power* to return?—Then were I to have gone back, muſt it not have been upon their own terms? *No conditioning with a father!* is a maxim with my father, and with my uncles. If I would have gone, Mr. Lovelace would have oppoſed it. So I muſt have been under his controul, or have run away *from* him, as it is ſuppoſed I did *to* him from Harlowe Place. In what a giddy light would this have made me appear!—Had he conſtrained me, could I have appealed to my friends for *their* protection, without riſquing the very conſequences, to prevent which (ſetting up myſelf preſumptuouſly, as a middle perſon between flaming ſpirits) I have run into ſuch terrible inconveniences.

But, after all, muſt it not give me great anguiſh of mind, to be forced to ſanctify, as I may ſay, by my ſeeming *after*-approbation, a meaſure I was ſo artfully tricked into, and which I was ſo much reſolved not to take?

How one evil brings on another, is ſorrowfully witneſſed to, by *your ever-obliged and affectionate*

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER XXI.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

FRIDAY, APR. 14.

THOU haſt often reproached me, Jack, with my vanity, without diſtinguiſhing the humorous turn that accompanies it; and for which, at the ſame time that thou robbeſt me of the merit of it, thou admireſt me highly. *Envy* gives thee the *indiſtinction: Nature* inſpires the *admiration*; unknown to thyſelf it inſpires it. But thou art too clumſy and too ſhort-ſighted a mortal, to know how to account even for the impulſes by which thou thyſelf art moved.

'Well, but this acquits thee not of 'my charge of vanity, Lovelace,' methinks thou ſayeſt.

And true thou ſayeſt: for I have indeed a confounded parcel of it. But, if men of parts may not be allowed to be vain, who ſhould! And yet, upon ſecond thoughts, men of parts have the leaſt occaſion of any to be vain; ſince the world (ſo few of *them* are there in it) are ready to find them out, and extol them. If a fool can be made ſenſible, that there is a man who has more underſtanding than *himſelf*, he is ready enough to conclude, that ſuch a man muſt be a very extraordinary creature.

And what, at this rate, is the general concluſion to be drawn from the premiſes?—Is it not, that *no* man ought to be vain? But what if a man can't help it!—This, perhaps, may be *my* caſe. But there is nothing upon which I value myſelf ſo much as upon my *inventions*. And for the ſoul of me, I cannot help letting it be ſeen, that I *do*. Yet this vanity may be a means, perhaps,

haps, to overthrow me with this sagacious lady.

She is very apprehensive of me, I see. I have fluted before her and Miss Howe, as often as I have been with them, to pass for a giddy thoughtless creature. What a folly then to be so *expatiatingly* sincere, in my answer to her home-put, upon the noises within the garden?—But such success having attended that contrivance, [Success, Jack, has blown many a man up!] my cursed *vanity* got uppermost, and kept down my *caution*. The menace to have secreted Solmes, and that other, that I had thoughts to run away with her foolish brother, and of my project to revenge her upon the two servants, so much terrified the dear creature, that I was forced to sit down to muse after means to put myself right in her opinion.

Some favourable incidents, at the time, tumbled in from my agent in her family; at least such as I was determined to *make* favourable: and therefore I desired admittance; and this before she could resolve any-thing against me; that is to say, while her admiration of my intrepidity kept resolution in suspense.

Accordingly, I prepared myself to be all gentleness, all obligingness, all serenity; and as I have now-and-then, and always *had*, more or less, good motions pop up in my mind, I encouraged and collected every-thing of this sort that I had ever had from novicehood to maturity, [*Not long in recollecting, Jack*] in order to bring the dear creature into good-humour with me*: 'And who 'knows,' thought I, 'if I can hold it, 'and proceed, but I may be able to lay 'a foundation fit to build my grand 'scheme upon!—LOVE,' thought I, 'is not *naturally* a doubter—FEAR is: 'I will try to banish the latter; nothing 'then but Love will remain. CREDULITY is the God of Love's *prime-minister*; and they never are asunder.'

He then acquaints his friend with what passed between him and the lady, in relation to his advices from Harlowe Place, and to his proposal about lodgings, pretty much to the same purpose as in her preceding letter.

When he comes to mention his proposal of the Windsor lodgings, thus he expresses himself:

Now, Belford, can it enter into thy leaden head, what I meant by this proposal!—I know it cannot. And so I'll tell thee.

To leave her for a day or two, with a view *to serve her by my absence*, would, as I thought, look like confiding in her favour. I could not think of leaving her, thou knowest, while I had reason to believe her friends would pursue us; and I began to apprehend, that she would suspect, that I made a pretence of that intentional pursuit, to keep about her and with her. But now that they had declared against it, and that they would *not* receive her if she went back, (a declaration she had better hear first from me, than from Miss Howe, or any other) what should hinder me from giving her this mark of my obedience; especially as I could leave Will, who is a clever fellow, and can do any-thing but write and spell, and Lord M.'s Jonas, (not as guards, to be sure, but as attendants only) the latter to be dispatched to me occasionally by the former, whom I could acquaint with my motions?

Then I wanted to inform myself, why I had not congratulatory letters from Lady Sarah and Lady Betty, and from my cousins Montague, to whom I had written, glorying in my beloved's escape; which letters, if properly worded, might be made necessary to shew her as matters proceed.

As to Windsor, I had no design to carry her particularly thither: but somewhere it was proper to name, as she condescended to ask my advice about it. London, I durst not; but very cautiously; and so as to make it her own option: for I must tell thee, that there is such a perverseness in the sex, that, when they ask your advice, they do it only to know your opinion, that they may oppose it; though, had not the thing in question been *your* choice, perhaps it had been *theirs*.

I could easily give reasons *against* Windsor, after I had pretended to be there; and this would have looked the better, as it was a place of my own no-

* He had said, Page 337, that he would make reformation his stalking-horse, &c.

mination;

mination; and ſhewn her, that I had no fixed ſcheme. Never was there in woman ſuch a ſagacious, ſuch an all-live apprehenſion, as in this. Yet it is a grievous thing to an honeſt man to be ſuſpected.

Then, in my going or return, I can call upon Mrs. Greme. She and my beloved had a great deal of talk together. If I knew what it was about; and that *either*, upon their firſt acquaintance, was for benefiting herſelf by the *other*; I might contrive to ſerve them *both*, without hurting *myſelf*: for theſe are the moſt prudent ways of doing friendſhips, and what are not followed by regrets, though the *ſerved* ſhould prove ingrateful. Then Mrs. Greme correſponds by pen and ink with her farmer-ſiſter where we are: ſomething may poſſibly ariſe *that* way, either of a convenient nature, *which I may purſue*; or of an inconvenient, *which I may avoid*.

Always be careful of back-doors, is a maxim with me in all my exploits. Whoever knows me, knows that I am no proud man. I can talk as familiarly to ſervants as to principals, when I have a mind to make it worth their while to oblige me in any-thing. Then ſervants are but as the common ſoldiers in an army: they do all the miſchief; frequently without malice, and merely, *good ſouls!* for miſchief-ſake.

I am moſt apprehenſive about Miſs Howe. She has a confounded deal of wit, and wants only a ſubject, to ſhew as much roguery: and ſhould I be outwitted with all my ſententious, boaſting conceit of my own *noſtrum-mongerſhip*—[*I love to plague thee, who art a pretender to accuracy*, and a ſurface-ſkimmer *in learning with* out-of-the-way *words and phraſes*] I ſhould certainly hang, drown, or ſhoot myſelf.

Poor Hickman! I pity him for the proſpect he has with ſuch a virago! But the fellow's a fool, God wot! And now I think of it, it is abſolutely neceſſary for compleat happineſs in the married-ſtate, that one *ſhould* be a fool [An argument I once held with this very Miſs Howe.] But then the fool ſhould *know* the other's ſuperiority; otherwiſe the obſtinate one will diſappoint the wiſe one.

But my agent Joſeph has helped me to ſecure this quarter, as I have hinted to thee more than once.

LETTER XXII.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

IN CONTINUATION.

BUT is it not a confounded thing, that I cannot faſten an obligation upon this proud beauty? I have two motives, in endeavouring to prevail upon her to accept of money and raiment from me: one, the real pleaſure I ſhould have in the accommodating of the haughty maid; and to think there was ſomething near her, and upon her, that I could call *mine*: the other, in order to abate her ſeverity, and humble her a little.

Nothing more effectually brings down a proud ſpirit, than a ſenſe of lying under pecuniary obligations. This has always made me ſolicitous to avoid laying myſelf under any ſuch: yet ſometimes formerly have I been put to it, and curſed the tardy reſolution of the quarterly periods. And yet I ever made ſhift to avoid anticipations: *I never would eat the calf in the cow's belly*, as Lord M.'s phraſe is; for what is that, but to hold our lands upon *tenant-courteſy*, the vileſt of all tenures? To be denied a fox-chace, for fear of breaking down a fence, upon my own grounds? To be clamoured at for repairs *ſtudied* for, rather than *really wanted?* To be prated to by a bumkin with his hat on, and his arms folded, as if he defied your expectations of that ſort; his foot firmly fixed, as if upon his own ground, and you forced to take his arch leers, and ſtupid gybes? he intimating by the whole of his conduct, that he had had it in his power to oblige you, and, if you behave civilly, may oblige you again?—I, who think I have a right to break every man's head I paſs by, if I like not his looks, to bear this!—No more could I do it, than I could borrow of an inſolent uncle, or inquiſitive aunt, who would thence think themſelves entitled to have an account of all my life and actions laid before them for their review and cenſure.

My charmer, I ſee, has a pride like my own: but ſhe has no *diſtinction* in her pride: nor knows the pretty fool, that there is nothing nobler, nothing more delightful, than for lovers to be con-

ferring and receiving obligations from each other. In this very farm-yard, to give thee a familiar inſtance, I have more than once ſeen this remark illuſtrated. A ſtrutting raſcal of a cock have I beheld chuck, chuck, chuck, chuck-ing his miſtreſs to him, when he has found a ſingle barley-corn, taking it up with his bill, and letting it drop five or ſix times, ſtill repeating his chucking invitation: and when two or three of his feathered ladies ſtrive who ſhall be the firſt for't, [*O Jack! a cock is a Grand Signor of a bird!*] he directs the bill of the foremoſt to it: and when ſhe has got the dirty pearl, he ſtruts over her with an erected creſt, and with an exulting chuck—a chuck-aw-aw-w, circling round her, with dropt wings, ſweeping the duſt in humble courtſhip: while the obliged ſhe, half-ſhy, half-willing, by her cowring tail, prepared wings, yet ſeemingly affrighted eyes, and contracted neck, lets one ſee, that ſhe knows the barley-corn was not all he called her for.

When he comes to that part of his narrative, where he mentions the propoſing of the lady's maid Hannah, *or one of the young Sorlings's, to attend her, thus he writes.*

Now, Belford, canſt thou imagine what I meant by propoſing Hannah, or one of the girls here, for her attendant? I'll give thee a month to gueſs.

Thou wilt not pretend to gueſs, thou ſay'ſt.

Well, then, I'll tell thee.

Believing ſhe would certainly propoſe to have that favourite wench about her, as ſoon as ſhe was a little ſettled, I had cauſed the girl to be enquired after, with an intent to make intereſt, ſome how or other, that a month's warning ſhould be inſiſted on by her maſter or miſtreſs, or by ſome other means, which I had not determined upon, to prevent her coming to her. But fortune fights for me. The wench is luckily ill; a violent rheumatick diſorder, which has obliged her to leave her place, confines her to her chamber. Poor Hannah! How I pity the girl! Theſe things are very hard upon induſtrious ſervants!—I intend to make the poor wench a ſmall preſent on the occaſion—I know it will oblige my charmer.

And ſo, Jack, *pretending not to know any thing of the matter*, I preſſed her to ſend for Hannah. She knew I had always a regard for this ſervant, becauſe of her honeſt love to her lady: but *now* I have a greater regard for her than ever. Calamity, though a poor ſervant's calamity, will rather increaſe than diminiſh good will, with a truly generous maſter or miſtreſs.

As to one of the young Sorlings's attendance, there was nothing at all in propoſing that; for if either of them had been choſen by *her*, and permitted by the *mother*, [*Two chances in that!*] it would have been only till I had fixed upon another. And if afterwards they had been loth to part, I could eaſily have given my beloved a jealouſy, which would have done the buſineſs; or to the girl, who would have quitted her *country dairy*, ſuch a reliſh for a *London one*, as would have made it very convenient for her to fall in love with Will; or perhaps I could have done ſtill better for her with Lord M.'s chaplain, who is very deſirous of ſtanding well with his lord's preſumptive-heir.

'A bleſſing on thy honeſt heart, 'Lovelace!' thou'lt ſay; 'for thou art 'for providing for every-body!'

He gives an account of the ſerious part of their converſation, with no great variation from the lady's account of it: and when he comes to that part of it, where he bids her remember, that reformation cannot be a ſudden thing, he aſks his friend—

Is not this fair play? Is it not dealing ingenuouſly? Then the obſervation, I will be bold to ſay, is founded in *truth* and *nature*. But there was a little touch of *policy* in it beſides; that the lady, if I ſhould fly out again, ſhould not think me too groſs an hypocrite: for, as I plainly told her, I was afraid, that my fits of reformation were *but* fits and ſallies; but I hoped her example would fix them into habits. But it is ſo diſcouraging a thing, to have my monitreſs ſo very good!—I proteſt I know not how to look up at her! Now, as I am thinking, if I could pull her down a little nearer to my own level; that is to ſay, could prevail upon her to do ſomething that would argue *imperfection*, ſomething *to repent of*; we ſhould

should jog on much more equally, and be better able to comprehend one another: and so the comfort would be mutual, and the remorse not all on one side.

He acknowledges that he was greatly affected and pleased with the lady's serious arguments at the time: but even then *was apprehensive that his temper would not hold. Thus he writes.*

This lady says serious things in so agreeable a manner, (and then her voice is all harmony when she touches a subject she is pleased with) that I could have listened to her for half a day together. But yet I am afraid, if she *falls*, as they call it, she will lose a good deal of that *pathos*, of that noble self-confidence, which gives a good person, as I now see, a visible superiority over one *not* so good.

But, after all, Belford, I would fain know why people call such free livers as you and me *hypocrites*.—That's a word I hate; and should take it very ill to be called by it. For myself, I have as good motions, and perhaps have them as frequently, as any-body: all the business is, they don't hold; or, to speak more in character, *I don't take the care some do, to conceal my lapses.*

LETTER XXIII.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

SATURDAY, APRIL 15.

THOUGH pretty much pressed in time, and oppressed by my mother's watchfulness, I will write a few lines upon the new light that has broken in upon your gentleman; and send it by a particular hand.

I know not what to think of him upon it. He talks well; but judge him by Rowe's lines, he is certainly a *dissembler*, odious as the sin of hypocrisy, and, as he says, that other of ingratitude, are to him.

And pray, my dear, let me ask, Could he have triumphed, as it is said he has done, over so many of our sex, had he not been egregiously guilty of *both* sins?

His ingenuousness is the thing that staggers me: yet is he cunning enough to know, that whoever accuses himself first, blunts the edge of an adversary's accusation.

He is certainly a man of sense: there is more hope of such a one, than of a fool: and there must be a *beginning* to a reformation. These I will allow in his favour.

But this, that follows, I think, is the only way to judge of his specious confessions and self-accusations—Does he confess any thing that you knew not before, or that you are not likely to find out from others?—If nothing else, what does he confess to his own disadvantage? You have heard of his duels: you have heard of his seductions.—All the world has. He *owns* therefore what it would be to no purpose to *conceal*; and his ingenuousness is a salvo —'Why, this, Madam, is no more 'than Mr. Lovelace *himself* acknow-'ledges.'

Well, but what is now to be done?—You must make the best of your situation: and as you say, so say I, I hope that will not be bad: for I like all that he has proposed to you of Windsor, and his canon's house. His readiness to leave you, and go himself in quest of a lodging, likewise looks well. And I think there is nothing can be so properly done, as (whether you get to a canon's house or not) that the canon should join you together in wedlock as soon as possible.

I much approve, however, of all your cautions, of all your vigilance, and of every thing you have done, but of your *meeting him*. Yet, in my disapprobation of that, I judge by the *event* only: for who would have divined, it would have concluded as it did? But he is the devil, by his own account: and had he run away with the wretched Solmes, and your more wretched brother, and himself been transported for life, he should have had my free consent for all three.

What use does he make of that Joseph Leman!—His ingenuousness, I must once more say, confounds me; but if, my dear, you can forgive your brother for the part he put that fellow upon acting, I don't know whether you ought to be angry at Lovelace. Yet I have wished fifty times, since Lovelace got you away, that you were rid of him, whether it were by a burning fe-

ver, by hanging, by drowning, or by a broken neck; provided it were before he laid you under a neceſſity to go into mourning for him.

I repeat my hitherto-rejected offer. May I ſend it ſafely by your old man? I have reaſons for not ſending it by Hickman's ſervant, unleſs I had a bank-note. Enquiring for ſuch may cauſe diſtruſt. My mother is ſo buſy, ſo inquiſitive—I don't love ſuſpicious tempers.

And here ſhe is continually in and out—I muſt break off.

* *

MR. Hickman begs his moſt reſpectful compliments to you, with offer of his ſervices. I told him I would oblige him, becauſe minds in trouble take kindly any-body's civilities; but that he was not to imagine that he particularly obliged me by this? ſince I ſhould think the man or woman either blind or ſtupid who admired not a perſon of your exalted merit for your own ſake, and wiſhed not to ſerve you without view to other reward than the honour of ſerving you.

To be ſure, that was his principal motive; with great daintineſs he ſaid it: but with a kiſs of his hand, and a bow to my feet, he hoped, that that fine lady's being *my friend* did not leſſen the merit of the reverence he really had for her.

Believe me ever, what you, my dear, ſhall ever find me, *your faithful and affectionate*

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XXIV.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

SAT. AFTERNOON.

I Detain your meſſenger while I write in anſwer to yours; the poor old man not being very well.

You diſhearten me a good deal about Mr. Lovelace. I may be too willing from my ſad circumſtances to think the beſt of him. If his pretences to reformation are *but* pretences, what muſt be his intent? But can the heart of man be ſo very vile? Can he, *dare* he, mock the Almighty? But may I not, from one very ſad reflection, think better of him; that I am thrown too much into his power, to make it *neceſſary* for him (except he were to intend the *very utmoſt* villainy by me) to be ſuch a ſhocking hypocrite? He muſt, at leaſt, be in earneſt, at the *time* he gives the better hopes. Surely he muſt. You yourſelf muſt join with me in this hope, or you could not wiſh me to be ſo dreadfully yoked.

But after all, I had rather, much rather, be independent of him, and of his family, although I have an high opinion of them; at leaſt till I ſee what my own may be brought to.—Otherwiſe, I think, it were beſt for me, at once, to caſt myſelf into Lady Betty's protection. All would then be conducted with decency, and perhaps many mortifications would be ſpared me. But then I muſt be *his*, at all adventures, and be thought to defy my own family. And ſhall I not firſt ſee the iſſue of *one* application? And yet I cannot make this, till I am ſettled ſomewhere, and at a diſtance from him.

Mrs. Sorlings ſhewed me a letter this morning, which ſhe had received from her ſiſter Greme laſt night; in which Mrs. Greme (hoping I would forgive her forward zeal, if her ſiſter thinks fit to ſhew her letter to me) wiſhes (and that for all the noble family's ſake, and ſhe hopes ſhe may ſay for my own) that I will be pleaſed to yield to make his honour, as ſhe calls him, happy. She grounds her *officiouſneſs*, as ſhe calls it, upon what he was ſo *condeſcending* [her word alſo] to ſay to her yeſterday, in his way to Windſor, on her *preſuming* to aſk, if ſhe might ſoon give him joy? That no man ever loved a woman as he loves me: that no woman ever ſo well deſerved to be beloved: that in every converſation, he admires me ſtill more: that he loves me with ſuch a purity, as he had never believed himſelf capable of, or that a mortal creature could have inſpired him with; looking upon me as all *ſoul*; as an angel ſent down to ſave *his*; and a great deal more of this ſort: but that he apprehends, my conſent to make him happy is at a greater diſtance than he wiſhes, and complained of the too ſevere reſtrictions I had laid upon him before I honoured him with my *confidence*: which reſtrictions *muſt be as ſacred to him, as if they were parts of the marriage-contract*, &c.

What, my dear, ſhall I ſay to this? How

How shall I take it? Mrs. Greme is a good woman. Mrs. Sorlings is a good woman. And this letter agrees with the conversation between Mr. Lovelace and me, which I thought, and still think, so agreeable*. Yet what means the man by *foregoing the opportunities he has had to declare himself?*—What mean his *complaints of my restrictions* to Mrs. Greme? He is not a bashful man.—But you say, I inspire people with an awe of me.—An awe, my dear!—As how?

I am quite petulant, fretful, and peevish, with myself, at times, to find, that I am bound to see the workings of this *subtle*, or this *giddy* spirit, which shall I call it?

How am I punished, as I frequently think, for my vanity, in hoping to be an *example* to young persons of my sex! Let me be but a *warning*, and I will now be contented. For, be my destiny what it may, I shall never be able to hold up my head again among my best friends and worthiest companions.

It is one of the cruellest circumstances that attends the faults of the inconsiderate, that she makes all who love her unhappy, and gives joy only to her own enemies, and to the enemies of her family.

What an useful lesson would this afford, were it properly inculcated at the time that the *tempted mind* was balancing upon a doubtful adventure?

You know not, my dear, the worth of a virtuous man; and, noble-minded as you are in most particulars, you partake of the common weakness of human nature, in being apt to slight what is in your own power.

You would not think of using Mr. Lovelace, were he your suitor, as you do the much worthier Mr. Hickman—Would you?—You know who says in my mother's case, 'Much *will* 'bear, much *shall* bear, all the world 'through†.' Mr. Hickman, I fancy, would be glad to know the lady's name, who made such an observation. He would think it hardly possible, but such a one should benefit by her own remark; and would be apt to wish his Miss Howe acquainted with her.

Gentleness of heart, surely, is not despicable in a man. Why, if it be, is the highest distinction a man can arrive at, that of a *gentleman?*—A distinction which a prince may not deserve. For manners, more than birth, fortune, or title, are requisite in this character. Manners are indeed the essence of it. And shall it be generally said, and Miss Howe not be an exception to it, (as once you wrote) that our sex are best dealt with by boisterous and unruly spirits‡?

Forgive me, my dear; and love me as you used to do. For although my fortunes are changed, my heart is not: nor ever will, while it bids my pen tell you, that it must cease to beat, when it is not as much yours, as *your*

CLARISSA HARLOWE's.

LETTER XXV.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

SATURDAY EVENING.

MR. Lovelace has seen divers apartments at Windsor; but not one, he says, that he thought fit for me, and which at the same time answered my description.

He has been very solicitous to keep to the letter of my instructions; which looks well: and the better I like him, as, although he proposed that town, he came back, dissuading me from it; for he said, that, in his journey from thence, he had thought Windsor, although of his own proposal, a wrong choice; because I coveted privacy, and that was a place generally visited and admired§.

I told him, that if Mrs. Sorlings thought me not an incumbrance, I would be willing to stay here a little longer; provided he would leave me, and go to Lord M.'s or to London, which ever he thought best.

He hoped, he said, that he might suppose me absolutely safe from the in-

* This letter Mrs. Greme (with no bad design on her part) was put upon writing by Mr. Lovelace himself, as will be seen Letter XXXI.

† See Vol. I. Page 31.

‡ See Vol. II. Page 153.

§ This inference of the lady in his favour is exactly what he had hoped for. See Page 350.

sults,

ſults or attempts of my brother; and, therefore, if it ſhould make me eaſier, he would obey, for a few days at leaſt.

He again propoſed to ſend for Hannah. I told him I deſigned to do ſo, through you—And ſhall I beg of you, my dear, to cauſe the honeſt creature to be ſent to? Your faithful Robert, I think, knows where ſhe is. Perhaps ſhe will be permitted to quit her place directly, by allowing a month's wages, which I will repay her. He took notice of the ſerious humour he found me in, and of the redneſs of my eyes. I had juſt been anſwering your letter; and had he not approached me, on his coming off his journey, in a very reſpectful manner; had he not made an unexceptionable report of his enquiries, and been ſo ready to go from me, at the very firſt word; I was prepared (notwithſtanding the good terms we parted upon when he ſet out for Windſor) to have given him a very unwelcome reception: for the contents of your laſt letter had ſo affected me, that the moment I ſaw him, I beheld with indignation the ſeducer, who had been the cauſe of all the evils I ſuffer, and have ſuffered.

He hinted to me, that he had received a letter from Lady Betty, and another (as I underſtood him) from one of the Miſs Montagues. If they take notice of *me* in them, I wonder that he did not acquaint me with the contents. I am afraid, my dear, that his relations are among thoſe, who think I have taken a raſh and inexcuſeable ſtep. It is not to my *credit* to let *even them* know, how I have been *frighted out of myſelf:* and yet perhaps they would hold me unworthy of their alliance, if they were to think my flight a voluntary one. O my dear, how uneaſy to us are our reflections upon every doubtful occurrence, when we know we have been prevailed upon to do a wrong thing!

SUNDAY MORNING.

Ah! this man, my dear! We have had warmer dialogues than ever yet we have had. At fair argument, I find I need not fear him *; but he is ſuch a wild, ſuch an ungovernable creature, [*He* reformed!] that I am half-afraid of him.

He again, on my declaring myſelf uneaſy at his ſtay with me here, propoſed that I would put myſelf into Lady Betty's protection; aſſuring me that he thought he could not leave me at Mrs. Sorlings's, with ſafety to myſelf. And upon my declining to do that, for the reaſons I gave you in my laſt†, he urged to me to make a demand of my eſtate.

He knew it, I told him, to be my reſolution not to litigate with my father.

Nor would he put me upon it, he replied, but as the *laſt* thing. But if my ſpirit would not permit me to be *obliged*, as I called it, to any-body; and yet if my relations would refuſe me my own; he knew not how I could keep up that ſpirit, without being put to inconveniences, which would give him infinite concern—Unleſs-unleſs-unleſs, he ſaid, heſitating, as if afraid to ſpeak out—Unleſs I would take the only method I *could* take, to obtain the poſſeſſion of my own.

'What is *that*, Sir?'

Sure the man ſaw by my looks, when he came with his creeping *unleſſes*, that I gueſſed what he meant.

'Ah, Madam! can you be at a loſs 'to know what that method is?—They 'will not diſpute with a *man* that right 'which they would conteſt with *you*.'

Why ſaid he with a *man*, inſtead of with him? Yet he looked as if he wanted to be encouraged to ſay more.

'So, Sir, you would have me to em'ploy a lawyer, would you, notwith'ſtanding what I have ever declared, as 'to litigating with my father?'

'No, I would not, my deareſt crea'ture,' ſnatching my hand, and preſſing it with his lips—'except you would 'make *me* the lawyer.'

Had he ſaid *me* at firſt, I ſhould have been above the affectation of mentioning a lawyer.

I bluſhed. The man purſued not the ſubject ſo ardently, but that it was more eaſy as well as more natural to avoid it, than to fall into it.

Would to Heaven he might, without offending!—But I *ſo* over-awed him!—[*Over-awed* him!—*Your* ‡ notion, my dear!] And ſo the over-awed baſhful man went off from the ſubject, repeating

* See this confirmed by Mr. Lovelace, Page 320.

† See Page 354.

‡ See Page 337, and 338.

his

his propoſal, that I would demand my own eſtate, or empower ſome man of the law to demand it, if I *would not* [he put in] empower a happier man to demand it. But he could not be amiſs, he thought, to acquaint my two truſtees, that I intended to aſſume it.

I ſhould know better what to do, I told him, when he was at a diſtance from me, and *known* to be ſo. 'I ſuppoſe, 'Sir, that if my father propoſe my re-'turn, and engage never to mention 'Solmes to me, nor any other man, but 'by *my conſent*, and I agree upon that 'condition to think no more of *you*, 'you will acquieſce?'

I was willing to try whether he had the regard to *all* my previous declarations, which he pretended to have to *ſome* of them.

He was ſtruck all of a heap.

'What ſay you, Mr. Lovelace? You 'know, all you mean is for my good. 'Surely I am my own miſtreſs: ſurely 'I need not aſk your leave to make 'what terms I pleaſe for myſelf, *ſo long* 'as I break none with you?'

He hemmed twice or thrice.—'Why, 'Madam—Why, Madam—I cannot 'ſay—' Then pauſing—and riſing from his ſeat, with petulance—'I ſee plainly 'enough,' ſaid he, 'the reaſon why 'none of my propoſals can be accepted: 'at *laſt* I am to be a ſacrifice to your 'reconciliation with your implacable 'family.'

'It has always been your reſpectful 'way, Mr. Lovelace, to treat my fa-'mily in this free manner. But pray, 'Sir, when you call *others* implacable, 'ſee that you deſerve not the ſame cen-'ſure *yourſelf*.'

He muſt needs ſay, there was no love loſt between ſome of my family and him; but he had not deſerved of *them* what they had of *him*.

'Yourſelf being judge, I ſuppoſe, 'Sir?'

'All the world, you yourſelf, Ma-'dam, being judge.'

'Then, Sir, let me tell you, had you 'been leſs upon your defiances, they 'would not have been irritated ſo much 'againſt you. But nobody ever heard, 'that avowed deſpite to the relations of 'a perſon was a proper courtſhip, either 'to that perſon, or to her friends.'

'Well, Madam, all that I know, is, 'that their malice againſt me is ſuch, 'that, if you determine to ſacrifice 'me, you may be reconciled when you 'pleaſe.'

'And all that I know, Sir, is, that 'if I do give my father the power of a 'negative, and he will be contented 'with *that*, it will be but my *duty* to 'give it him; and if I preſerve one to 'myſelf, I ſhall break through no obli-'gation to *you*.'

'Your duty to your capricious *bro-'ther*, not to your *father*, you mean, 'Madam.'

'If the diſpute lay between my bro-'ther and me at *firſt*, ſurely, Sir, a fa-'ther may chuſe which party he will 'take.'

'He *may*, Madam—But that exempts 'him not from blame for all that, if he 'take the wrong.'

'Different people will judge diffe-'rently, Mr. Lovelace, of the right and 'the wrong. *You* judge as you pleaſe. 'Shall not others as *they* pleaſe? And 'who has a right to controul a father's 'judgment in his own family, and in 'relation to his own child?'

'I know, Madam, there is no argu-'ing with you. But, nevertheleſs, I 'had hoped to have made myſelf ſome 'little merit with you, ſo as that I 'might not have been the *preliminary* 'ſacrifice to a reconciliation.'

'Your hope, Sir, had been better 'grounded, if you had had my conſent 'to my abandoning of my father's 'houſe.'

'Always, Madam, and for ever, to 'be reminded of the choice you would 'have made of that damned Solmes—'rather than—'

'Not ſo haſty! Not ſo raſh, Mr. Love-'lace! I am convinced, that there was 'no intention to marry me to that 'Solmes on Wedneſday.'

'So I am told they now give out, in 'order to juſtify themſelves at your 'expence. Every-body living, Ma-'dam, is obliged to you for your kind 'thoughts, but I.'

'Excuſe me, *good* Mr. Lovelace,' [waving my hand, and bowing] 'that 'I am willing to think the beſt of my 'father.'

'Charming creature!' ſaid he, 'with 'what a bewitching air is that ſaid!'—And with a vehemence in his manner, would have ſnatched my hand. But I withdrew it, being much offended with him.

'I think, Madam, my ſufferings for 'your

'your ſake might have entitled me to 'ſome favour.'

'*My* ſufferings, Sir, for your impe- 'tuous temper, ſet againſt *your* ſuffer- 'ings for *my ſake*, I humbly conceive, 'leave me very little your debtor.'

'Lord, Madam!' [aſſuming a drolling air] 'What have *you* ſuffered!—'Nothing but what you can eaſily for- 'give. You have been *only* made a 'priſoner in your father's houſe, by the 'way of doing credit to your judg- 'ment!—You have *only* had an inno- 'cent and faithful ſervant turned out 'of your ſervice, becauſe you loved 'her—You have *only* had your ſiſter's 'confident ſervant ſet over you, with 'leave to teaze and affront you.'—

'Very well, Sir!'

'You have *only* had an inſolent bro- 'ther take upon him to treat you like 'a ſlave, and as inſolent a ſiſter to un- 'dermine you in every-body's favour, 'on pretence to keep you out of hands, 'which, if as vile as they vilely report, 'are not, however, half ſo vile and cruel 'as their own!'

'Go on, Sir, if you pleaſe!'

'You have *only* been perſecuted, in 'order to oblige you to have a ſordid 'fellow, whom you have profeſſed to 'hate, and whom every-body deſpiſes! 'The licence has been *only* got! The 'parſon has *only* been had in readineſs! 'The day, a near, a *very* near day, has 'been *only* fixed! And you were *only* 'to be ſearched for your correſpon- 'dences, and ſtill cloſer confined, till 'the day came, in order to deprive you 'of all means of eſcaping the ſnare laid 'for you!—But all this you can for- 'give? You can wiſh you had ſtood 'all this; inevitable as the compulſion 'muſt have been?—And the man who, 'at the hazard of his life, has delivered 'you from all theſe mortifications, is 'the only perſon you *cannot* forgive!'

'Can't you go on, Sir? You ſee I 'have patience to hear you. Can't 'you go on, Sir?'

'I can, Madam, with *my* ſufferings: 'which I confeſs ought not to be men- 'tioned, were I at laſt to be rewarded 'in the manner I hoped.'

'*Your* ſufferings then, if you pleaſe, 'Sir?'

'—Affrontingly forbidden your fa- 'ther's houſe, after encouragement 'given, without any reaſons they knew 'not before, to juſtify the prohibition: 'forced upon a rencounter I wiſhed to 'avoid; the firſt I ever, ſo provoked, 'wiſhed to avoid. And that, becauſe 'the wretch was your brother!'

'Wretch, Sir!—And my brother!— 'This could be from no man breath- 'ing, but from him before me!'

'Pardon me, Madam!—But, oh! 'how unworthy to be your brother!— 'The quarrel grafted upon an old one, 'when at college; he univerſally known 'to be the aggreſſor; and revived for 'views equally ſordid, and injurious 'both to yourſelf and me—Giving life 'to him, who would have taken away 'mine!'

'Your *generoſity* THIS, Sir; not your 'ſufferings: a little more of your *ſuf- 'ferings*, if you pleaſe!—I hope you do 'not repent, that you did not murder 'my brother!'

'My private life hunted into! My 'morals decried! Some of the accuſers 'not unfaulty?'

'That's an aſperſion, Sir!'

'Spies ſet upon my conduct! One 'hired to bribe my own ſervant's fide- 'lity; perhaps to have poiſoned me at 'laſt, if the honeſt fellow had not—'

'*Facts*, Mr. Lovelace!—Do you 'want facts in the diſplay of your ſuf- 'ferings?—None of your *perhaps's*, I 'beſeech you!'

'Menaces every day, and defiances, 'put into every-one's mouth againſt 'me! Forced to creep about in diſ- 'guiſes—and to watch *all hours*—'

'And in *all weathers*, I ſuppoſe, 'Sir—That I remember was once your 'grievance! *In all weathers*, Sir*! 'And all theſe hardſhips ariſing from 'yourſelf, not impoſed by me.'

'—Like a thief, or an eves-dropper,' proceeded he: 'and yet neither by birth 'nor alliances unworthy of *their* rela- 'tion, whatever I may be and am of 'their admirable daughter: of whom 'they, every one of them, are at leaſt '*as* unworthy!—Theſe, Madam, I 'call ſufferings: *juſtly* call ſo; if at laſt 'I am to be ſacrificed to an imperfect 'reconciliation—*Imperfect*, I ſay: for 'can you expect to live ſo much as '*tolerably*, under the ſame roof, after 'all that has paſſed, with that brother 'and ſiſter?'

* See Page 303, and 304.

'O Sir,

'O Sir, Sir! What ſufferings have yours been! And all for my ſake, I warrant!—I can never reward you for them!—Never think of me more, I beſeech you—How can you have patience with me?—Nothing has been owing to your own behaviour, I preſume; nothing to your defiances for defiances; nothing to your reſolution declared more than once, that you *would* be related to a family, which, nevertheleſs, you would not ſtoop to aſk a relation of; nothing, in ſhort, to courſes which every-body blamed you for, you not thinking it worth your while to juſtify yourſelf. Had I not thought you uſed in an ungentlemanly manner, as I have heretofore told you, you had not had my notice by pen and ink*. That notice gave you a ſuppoſed ſecurity, and you generouſly defied my friends the more for it: and this brought upon me (perhaps not undeſervedly) my father's diſpleaſure; without which my brother's private pique, and ſelfiſh views, would have wanted a foundation to build upon: ſo that for all that followed of my treatment, and your redundant *only's*, I might thank you principally, as you may yourſelf for all your *ſufferings*, your *mighty* ſufferings!—And if, voluble Sir, you have founded any merit upon them, be ſo good as to revoke it: and look upon *me*, with my forfeited reputation, as the only ſufferer—For what—Pray hear me out, Sir,' [for he was going to ſpeak]—'have you ſuffered in, but your pride? Your reputation *could not* ſuffer: *that* it was beneath you to be ſolicitous about. And had you not been an unmanageable man, I ſhould not have been driven to the extremity I now every hour, as the hour paſſes, deplore—With this additional reflection upon myſelf, that I ought not to have *begun*, or, having begun, not *continued* a correſpondence with one, who thought it not worth his while to clear his own character for *my ſake*, or to ſubmit to my father for *his own*, in a point wherein every father ought to have an option.'

'Darkneſs, light—Light, darkneſs—by my ſoul!—Juſt as you pleaſe to have it, O charmer of my heart!'—ſnatching my hand, and preſſing it between both his, to his lips, in a ſtrange wild way—'Take me, take me to yourſelf—Mould me as you pleaſe—I am wax in your hands—Give me your own impreſſion; and ſeal me for ever yours—We were born for each other! —You to make me happy, and ſave a ſoul—I am all error, all crime. I ſee what I ought to have done. But do you think, Madam, I can willingly conſent to be ſacrificed to a partial reconciliation, in which I ſhall be ſo great, ſo irreparable a ſufferer!—Anything but *that*—Include me in your terms; preſcribe to me; promiſe for me as you pleaſe—Put a halter about my neck, and lead me by it, upon condition of forgiveneſs on that diſgraceful penance, and of a proſtration as ſervile, to your father's preſence, (your brother abſent;) and I will beg his conſent at his feet, and bear anything but ſpurning from him, becauſe he is your father. But to give you up upon *cold* conditions, d—n me,' [ſaid the ſhocking wretch] 'if I either will, or can!'

Theſe were his words, as near as I can remember them; for his behaviour was ſo ſtrangely wild and fervent, that I was perfectly frighted. I thought he would have devoured my hand. I wiſhed myſelf a thouſand miles diſtant from him.

I told him, I by no means approved of his violent temper: he was too boiſterous a man for my liking. I ſaw *now*, by the converſation that had paſſed, what was his boaſted regard to my *injunctions*; and ſhould take my meaſures accordingly, as he ſhould *ſoon* find. And with a half-frighted earneſtneſs I deſired him to withdraw, and leave me to myſelf.

He obeyed; and that with extreme complaiſance in his manner, but with his complexion greatly heightened, and a countenance as greatly diſſatisfied.

But, on recollecting all that paſſed, I plainly ſee, that he means not, if he can help it, to leave me to the liberty of refuſing him; which I had, nevertheleſs, preſerved a *right* to do; but looks upon me as *his*, by a ſtrange ſort of obligation, for having run away with me *againſt my will*.

Yet you ſee he but touches upon the edges of matrimony neither. And that

* See Page 304.

at a time generally, when he has either excited one's paſſions or apprehenſions; ſo that one cannot at once deſcend. But ſurely this cannot be his deſign.—And yet ſuch ſeemed to be his behaviour to my ſiſter*, when he provoked her to refuſe him, and ſo tamely ſubmitted, as he did, to her refuſal.—But he dare not—What can one ſay of ſo various a man?—I am now again out of conceit with him. I wiſh I were fairly out of his power.

He has ſent up three times to beg admittance; in the two laſt, with unuſual earneſtneſs. But I have ſent him word I will firſt finiſh what I am about.

What to do about going from this place, I cannot tell. I could ſtay here with all my heart, as I have ſaid to him: the gentlewoman and her daughters are deſirous that I will; although not very convenient for them, I believe, neither; but I ſee he will not leave me, while I do—So I *muſt* remove ſomewhere.

I have long been ſick of myſelf: and now I am more and more ſo. But let me not loſe your good opinion. If I do, that loſs will compleat the misfortunes of *your*

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER XXVI.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

SUNDAY NIGHT, (APRIL 16.)

I May ſend to you, although you are forbid to write to me; may I not?—For that is not a *correſpondence* (Is it?) where letters are not anſwered.

I am ſtrangely at a loſs what to think of this man. He is a perfect Proteus. I can but write according to the ſhape he aſſumes at the time. Don't think *me* the changeable perſon, I beſeech you, if in one letter I contradict what I wrote in another; nay, if I ſeem to contradict what I ſaid in the ſame letter: for he is a perfect chameleon; or rather more variable than the chameleon; for that, it is ſaid, cannot aſſume the *red* and the *white*; but this man *can*. And though *black* ſeems to be his natural colour, yet has he taken great pains to make me think him nothing but *white*.

But you ſhall judge of him, as I proceed. Only, if I any-where appear to you to be credulous, I beg you to ſet me right: for you are a ſtander-by, as you ſay in a former†—Would to Heaven I were not to play! For I think, after all, I am held to a deſperate game.

Before I could finiſh my laſt to you, he ſent up twice more to beg admittance. I returned for anſwer, that I would ſee him at my own time: I would neither be invaded, nor preſcribed to.

Conſidering how we parted, and my delaying his *audience*, as he ſometimes calls it, I expected him to be in no very good humour, when I admitted of his viſit; and by what I wrote, you will conclude that *I* was not. Yet mine ſoon changed, when I ſaw his extreme humility at his entrance, and heard what he had to ſay.

'I have a letter, Madam,' ſaid he, 'from Lady Betty Lawrance, and another from my couſin Charlotte. But 'of theſe more by-and-by. I came now 'to make my humble acknowledgment 'to you, upon the arguments that paſſed 'between us ſo lately.'

I was ſilent, wondering what he was driving at.

'I am a moſt unhappy creature,' proceeded he: 'unhappy from a ſtrange impatiency of ſpirit, which I cannot conquer.—It always brings upon me deſerved humiliation. But it is more laudable to acknowledge, than to perſevere, when under the power of conviction.'

I was ſtill ſilent.

'I have been conſidering what you 'propoſed to me, Madam, that I ſhould 'acquieſce with ſuch terms as you 'ſhould think proper to comply with, 'in order to a reconciliation with your 'friends.'

'Well, Sir.'

'And I find all juſt, all right, on 'your ſide; and all impatience, all in'conſideration, on mine.'

I ſtared, you may ſuppoſe. 'Whence 'this change, Sir? And ſo ſoon?'

'I am ſo much convinced, that you 'muſt be in the right in all you think 'fit to inſiſt upon, that I ſhall for the 'future miſtruſt myſelf; and, if it be 'poſſible, whenever I differ with you, 'take an hour's time for recollection, 'before I give way to that vehemence,

* See Vol. I. Page 11.

† See Page 316.

which

'which an oppoſition, to which I have 'not been accuſtomed, too often gives 'me.'

'All this is mighty good, Sir: but 'to what does it tend?'

'Why, Madam, when I came to 'conſider what you had propoſed, as 'to the terms of reconciliation with 'your friends; and when I recollected, 'that you had always *referred to your-'ſelf* to *approve* or *reject* me, accord-'ing to my *merits* or *demerits*; I plainly 'ſaw, that it was rather a *condeſcenſion* 'in you, that you were pleaſed to aſk 'my conſent to thoſe terms, than that 'you were impoſing a *new law*: and I 'now, Madam, beg your pardon for 'my *impatience*. Whatever terms 'you think proper to come into with 'your relations, which will enable 'you to honour me with the *conditional* 'effect of your promiſe to me, to theſe 'be pleaſed to conſent: and if I loſe 'you, inſupportable as that thought is 'to me; yet, as it muſt be by my own 'fault, I ought to thank myſelf for it.'

What think you, Miſs Howe?—Do you believe he can have any view in this?—I cannot ſee any he could have; and I thought it beſt, as he put it in ſo right a manner, to appear not to doubt the ſincerity of his confeſſion, and to accept of it, as ſincere.

He then read to me part of Lady Betty's letter; turning down the beginning, which was a little too ſevere upon him, he ſaid, for my eye: and I believe, by the ſtile, the remainder of it was in a *corrective* ſtrain.

It was too plain, I told him, that he muſt have great faults, that none of his relations could write to him, but with a mingled cenſure for ſome bad action.

'And it is as plain, my deareſt crea-'ture,' ſaid he, 'that you, who know 'not of any ſuch faults, but by ſur-'mize, are equally ready to condemn 'me.—Will not charity allow you to 'infer, that *their* charges are no better 'grounded?—And that my principal 'fault has been careleſsneſs of my cha-'racter, and too little ſolicitude to clear 'myſelf when aſperſed? Which I do 'aſſure you is the caſe.'

Lady Betty, in her letter, expreſſes herſelf in the moſt obliging manner, in relation to me. She wiſhes him ſo to behave, as to encourage me to make him ſoon happy. She deſires her compliments to me, and expreſſes her impatience to ſee, as her niece, ſo *celebrated a lady*; [thoſe are her high words.] She ſhall take it for an honour, ſhe ſays, to be put into a way to oblige me. She hopes I will not too long delay the ceremony; becauſe that performed, will be to her, and to Lord M. and Lady Sarah, a ſure pledge of her nephew's merits, and good behaviour.

She ſays, ſhe was always ſorry to hear of the hardſhips I had met with on his account: that he will be the moſt ungrateful of men, if he make not *all up* to me. And that ſhe thinks it incumbent upon all their family to ſupply to me the loſt favour of my own: and, for her part, nothing of that kind, ſhe bids him aſſure me, ſhall be wanting.

Her ladyſhip obſerves, that the treatment he had received from my family, would have been more unaccountable than it was, with ſuch natural and accidental advantages as he had, had it not been owing to his own careleſs manners. But ſhe hopes that he will convince the Harlowe-family, that they had thought worſe of him than he had deſerved; ſince now it was in his power to eſtabliſh his character for ever. This ſhe prays to God to enable him to do, as well for his own honour, as for the honour of their *houſe*, was the magnificent word.

She concludes, with deſiring to be informed of our nuptials the moment they are celebrated, that ſhe may be with the earlieſt in felicitating me on the happy occaſion.

But her ladyſhip gives me no direct invitation to attend her before the marriage: which I might have expected from what he had told me.

He then ſhewed me part of Miſs Montague's more ſprightly letter, congratulating him upon the honour he had obtained, of the *confidence of ſo admirable a* lady. Theſe are her words. *Confidence*, my dear! Nobody, indeed, as you ſay, will believe otherwiſe, were they to be told the truth: and you ſee that Miſs Montague (and all his family, I ſuppoſe) think the ſtep I have taken, an *extraordinary* one. *She* alſo wiſhes for his ſpeedy nuptials; and to ſee her new couſin at M. Hall: as do

Lord M. she tells him and her sister; and in general all the well-wishers of their family.

Whenever this happy day shall be passed, she proposes, she says, to attend me, and to make one in my train to M. Hall, if his lordship shall continue as ill of the gout as he is at present. But that should he get better, he will himself attend me, she is sure, and conduct me thither; and afterwards quit either of his three seats to us, till we shall be settled to our mind.

This young lady says nothing in excuse for not meeting me on the road, or St. Alban's, as he had made me expect she would: yet mentions *her having been indisposed*. Mr. Lovelace had also told me, that Lord M. *was ill of the gout*; which Miss Montague's letter confirms.

But why did not the man shew me these letters last night? Was he afraid of giving me too much pleasure?

LETTER XXVII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

YOU may believe, my dear, that these letters put me in good-humour with him. He saw it in my countenance, and congratulated himself upon it. Yet I cannot but repeat my wonder, that I could not have the contents of them communicated to me last night *.

He then urged me to go directly to Lady Betty's, on the strength of her letter.

'But how,' said I, 'can I do that, 'were I even out of all hope of a re-'conciliation with my friends, (which 'yet, however unlikely to be effected, 'is my duty to *attempt*) as her lady-'ship has given me no particular invi-'tation?'

That, he was sure, was owing to her doubt that it would be accepted—Else she had done it with the greatest pleasure in the world.

That doubt itself, I said, was enough to deter me: since her ladyship, who knew so well the boundaries of the fit and the unfit, by her not expecting I would accept of an invitation, had she given it, would have reason to think me very forward, if I had accepted it; and much more forward to go without it. 'Then,' said I, 'I thank *you*, 'Sir, I have no cloaths fit to go any-'whither, or to be seen by any-body.'

O, I was fit to appear in the drawing-room, were full dress and jewels to be excused; and should make the most amiable [he must mean *extraordinary*] figure there. He was astonished at the elegance of my dress. By what art he knew not, but I appeared to such advantage, as if I had a different suit every day. Besides, his cousins Montague would supply me with all I wanted for the present; and he would write to Miss Charlotte accordingly, if I would give him leave.

'Do you think me the jay in the fa-'ble?' said I. 'Would you have me 'visit the owners of the borrowed 'dresses in their own cloaths? Surely, 'Mr. Lovelace, you think I have ei-'ther a very low, or a very confident 'mind.'

Would I chuse to go to London (for a few days only) in order to furnish myself with cloaths?

'Not at your expence, Sir,' said I, in an angry tone.

I could not have appeared in earnest to him, in my displeasure at his artful contrivances to get me away, if I were not occasionally to shew my real fretfulness upon the destitute condition to which he has reduced me. When people set out wrong together, it is very difficult to avoid recriminations.

He wished he knew but my mind—That should direct him in his proposals, and it would be his delight to observe it, whatever it were.

'My mind is, that you, Sir, should 'leave me out of hand—How often 'must I tell you so?'

If I were any-where but here, he would obey me, he said, if I insisted upon it. But if I would assert my right, that would be infinitely preferable, in his opinion, to any other measure *but one: (which he durst only hint at)* for then admitting *his* visits, or refusing them, as I pleased, (granting a correspondence by letter only) it would appear to all the world, that what I had done, was but in order to do myself justice.

* The reader will see how Miss Howe accounts for this in Page 373.

'How

'How often, Mr. Lovelace, must I 'repeat, that I will not litigate with 'my father?—Do you think that my 'unhappy circumstances will alter my 'notions of my own duty so far as I 'shall be enabled to perform it? How 'can I obtain possession without litiga-'tion, and but by my trustees? One 'of them will be against me; the other 'is abroad. Then the remedy pro-'posed by this measure, were I *dis-'posed* to fall in with it, will require 'time to bring it to effect; and what I 'want, is *present* independence, and 'your *immediate* absence.'

Upon his soul, the wretch swore, he did not think it safe, for the reasons he had before given, to leave me here. He wished I would think of some place, to which I should like to go. But he must take the liberty to say, that he hoped his behaviour had not been so exceptionable, as to make me so *very* earnest for his absence in the interim: and the less, surely, as I was almost *eternally* shutting up myself from him; although he presumed to assure me, that he never went from me, but with a corrected heart, and with strengthened resolutions of improving by my example.

'*Eternally shutting myself up from 'you!*' repeated I—'I hope, Sir, that 'you will not pretend to take it *amiss*, 'that I expect to be uninvaded in my 'retirements. I hope you do not think 'me so weak a creature (novice as you 'have found me in a very capital in-'stance) as to be fond of occasions to 'hear your fond speeches, especially as 'no *differing circumstances* require your 'over-frequent visits; nor that I am to 'be addressed to as if I thought hourly 'professions *needful* to assure me of 'your honour.'

He seemed a little disconcerted.

'You know, Mr. Lovelace,' pro-ceeded I, 'why I am so earnest for 'your absence. It is, that I may ap-'pear to the world independent of you; 'and in hopes, by that means, to find 'it less difficult to set on foot a recon-'ciliation with my friends. And now 'let me add, (in order to make you ea-'sier as to the terms of that hoped-for 'reconciliation) that since I find I have 'the good fortune to stand so well with 'your relations, I will, from time to 'time, acquaint you, by letter, when 'you are absent, with every step I 'shall take, and with every overture 'that shall be made to me: but not 'with an intention to render myself 'accountable to you, neither, as to my 'acceptance or non-acceptance of those 'overtures. They know, that I have 'a power given me by my grandfa-'ther's will, to bequeath the estate he 'left me, with other of his bounties, 'in a way that may affect them, though 'not absolutely from them; this *consi-'deration*, I hope, will procure me 'some from them when their passion 'subsides, and when they know I am 'independent of you.'

'Charming reasoning!'—And let him tell me, that the assurance I had given him was *all he wished for*. It was *more* than he could ask. What a happiness to have a woman of honour, and generosity to depend upon! Had he, on his first entrance into the world, met with such a one, he had never been other than a man of strict virtue.—But all, he hoped, was for the best; since, in that case, he had never perhaps had the happiness he had now in view; because his relations had been always urging him to marry; and that before he had the honour to know me. And now, as he had not been so bad as some peoples malice reported him to be, he hoped he should have near as much merit in his repentance, as if he had never erred.—A fine rakish notion and hope! And too much encouraged, I doubt, my dear, by the generality of our sex!

This brought on a more serious ques-tion or two. You'll see by it what a creature an unmortified libertine is.

I asked him, if he knew what he had said, alluded to a sentence in the best of books, *That there was more joy in hea-ven*—

He took the words out of my mouth, '*Over one sinner that repenteth, than 'over ninety-and-nine just persons which 'need no repentance**,' were his words.

'Yes, Madam, I thought of it as 'soon as I said it, but not before. I 'have read the story of the Prodigal 'Son, I'll assure you: and one day, 'when I am settled as I hope to be, 'will write a dramatick piece on the

* Luke XV. 7. The parable is concerning the ninety-nine sheep, not the Prodigal Son, as Mr. Lovelace erroneously imagines.

'subject.

'subject. I have at times had it in 'my head; and you will be too ready, 'perhaps, to allow me to be qualified 'for it.'

'You so lately, Sir, stumbled at a 'word, with which you must be better 'acquainted, ere you can be thoroughly master of such a subject, that I am 'amazed you should know any-thing 'of the Scripture, and be so ignorant 'of that*.'

'O, Madam, I have read the Bible, 'as a fine piece of ancient history— 'But as I hope to be saved, it has for 'some few years past made me so uneasy, when I have popped upon some 'passages in it, that I have been forced 'to run to musick or company to divert myself.'

'Poor wretch!' lifting up my hands and eyes.

'The denunciations come so slapdash upon one, so unceremoniously, 'as I may say, without even the By-your-leave of a rude London chairman, that they overturn one, horse 'and man, as St. Paul was overturned. 'There's another Scripture allusion, 'Madam!' The light in short, as his was, is too glaring to be borne.

'*O, Sir, do you want to be complimented into repentance and salvation?* 'But pray, Mr. Lovelace, do you 'mean any-thing at all, when you 'swear so often as you do, *By your 'soul*, or bind an asseveration with the 'words, *As you hope to be saved?*'

'O my beloved creature,' shifting his seat, 'let us call another cause.'

'Why, Sir, don't *I* neither use *ceremony* enough with you?'

'Dearest Madam, forbear for the 'present: I am but in my noviciate. 'Your foundation must be laid brick 'by brick: you'll hinder the progress 'of the good work you would promote, if you tumble in a whole waggon-load at once upon me.'

'Lord bless me,' thought I, 'what 'a character is that of a libertine! 'What a creature am I, who have risqued what I have risqued with such 'a one!—What a task before me, if 'my hopes continue of reforming such 'a wild Indian as this!—Nay worse 'than a wild Indian; for a man who 'errs with his eyes open, and against 'conviction, is a thousand times worse 'for what he knows, and much harder 'to be reclaimed, than if he had never 'known any thing at all.'

I was equally shocked *at* him, and concerned *for* him; and, having laid so few bricks, (to speak to his allusion) and those so ill cemented, I was as willing as the gay inconsiderate, to call another cause, as he termed it—Another cause, too, more immediately pressing upon me, from my uncertain situation.

I said, I took it for granted, that he assented to the reasoning he seemed to approve, and would leave me. And then I asked him, what he really, and in his most deliberate mind, would advise me to, in my present situation? He must needs see, I said, that I was at a great loss what to resolve upon; entirely a stranger to London, having no adviser, no protector, at present: himself, he must give me leave to tell him, greatly deficient in *practice*, if not in the *knowledge*, of those decorums, which, I had supposed, were always to be found in a man of birth, fortune, and education.

He imagines himself, I find, to be a very polite man, and cannot bear to be thought otherwise. He puts up his lip—'I am sorry for it, Madam—A 'man of breeding, a man of politeness, give me leave to say,' [colouring] 'is much more of a black swan 'with *you*, than with any lady I ever 'met with.'

'Then that is your misfortune, Mr. 'Lovelace, as well as mine, at present. 'Every woman of discernment, I am 'confident, knowing what I know of 'you now, would say as I say;' [*I had a mind to mortify a pride, that I am sure deserves to be mortified*] 'that your politeness is not regular, nor constant. 'It is not *habit*. It is too much seen 'by fits and starts, and sallies, and 'those not spontaneous. You must be '*reminded* into them.'

'O Lord! O Lord!—Poor I!'—was the light, yet the half-angry wretch's self-pitying expression!

I proceeded.—'Upon my word, Sir, 'you are not the accomplished man, 'which your talents and opportunities 'would have led one to expect you to 'be. You are indeed in your noviciate, as to every laudable attainment.'

* See Page 347.

LETTER XXVIII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

IN CONTINUATION.

AS this subject was introduced by himself, and treated so lightly by him, I was going on to tell him more of my mind; but he interrupted me—'Dear, dear Madam, spare me. I am 'sorry that I have lived to this hour for 'nothing at all. But surely you could 'not have quitted a subject so much 'more agreeable, and so much more '*suitable*, I will say, to your present 'situation, if you had not too cruel a 'pleasure in mortifying a man, who 'the less needed to be mortified, as he '*before* looked up to you with a diffi-'dence in his own merits too great to 'permit him to speak half his mind to 'you. Be pleased but to return to the 'subject we were upon; and at another 'time I will gladly embrace correction 'from the only lips in the world so 'qualified to give it.'

'You talk of reformation some-'times, Mr. Lovelace; and in so talk-'ing, acknowledge errors. But I see 'you can very ill bear the reproof, for 'which perhaps you are not solicitous 'to avoid *giving* occasion. Far be it 'from me to take delight in finding 'fault: I should be glad for both our 'sakes, since my situation is what it 'is, that I could do nothing but praise 'you. But failures which affect a 'mind that need not be very delicate to 'be affected by them, are too grating 'to be passed over in silence by a per-'son who wishes to be thought in ear-'nest in her own duties.'

'I admire your delicacy, Madam,' again interrupted he. 'Although I 'suffer by it, yet would I not have it 'otherwise: indeed I would not, when 'I consider of it. It is an angelick 'delicacy, which sets you above all 'our sex, and even above your own. 'It is *natural* to *you*, Madam; so you 'may think it extraordinary: but there 'is nothing like it on earth,' said the flatterer.—What company has he kept!

'But let us return to the former 'subject—You were so good as to ask 'me, what I would advise you to do: 'I want but to make you easy; I want 'but to see you fixed to your liking. 'Your faithful Hannah with you; your 'reconciliation with those to whom 'you wish to be reconciled, set on foot, 'and in a train. And now let me 'mention to you different expedients; 'in hopes that some one of them may 'be acceptable to you.

'I will go to Mrs. Howe, or to Miss 'Howe, or to whomsoever you would 'have me to go, and endeavour to pre-'vail upon them to receive you*.

'Do you incline to go to Florence to 'your cousin Morden? I will furnish 'you with an opportunity of going 'thither, either by sea to Leghorn, or 'by land through France. Perhaps I 'may be able to procure one of the la-'dies of my family to attend you. Ei-'ther Charlotte or Patty would rejoice 'in such an opportunity of seeing 'France and Italy. As for myself, I 'will only be your escort, in disguise, 'if you will have it so, even in your '*livery*, that your punctilio may not 'receive offence by my attendance.'

I told him, I would consider of all he had said: but that I hoped for a line or two from my aunt Hervey, if not from my sister, to both of whom I had writ-ten; which, if I were to be so favoured, might help to determine me. Mean time, if he would withdraw, I would particularly consider of this proposal of his, in relation to my cousin Morden. And if it held it's weight with me, so far as to write for your opinion upon it, he should know my mind in an hour's time.

He withdrew with great respect: and in an hour's time returned. And then I told him it was unnecessary to trouble you for your opinion about it. My cousin Morden was soon expected. If he were not, I could not admit him to accompany me to him upon any condi-tion. It was highly improbable that I should obtain the favour of either of his cousins company: and if that *could* be brought about, it would be the same thing in the world's eye, as if he went himself.

* The reader, perhaps, need not be reminded, that he had taken care from the first (See Vol. I. Page 93) to deprive her of any protection from Mrs. Howe. See in his next Letter, Page 371, a repeated account of the same artifices, and his exultations upon his in-ventions to impose upon two such watchful ladies as Clarissa and Miss Howe.

This

This led us into another converſation: which ſhall be the ſubject of my next.

LETTER XXIX.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

IN CONTINUATION.

MR. Lovelace told me, that on the ſuppoſition that his propoſal in relation to my couſin Morden might not be accepted, he had been ſtudying to find out, if poſſible, ſome other expedient that might be agreeable, in order to convince me, that he preferred my ſatisfaction to his own.

He then offered to go himſelf, and procure my Hannah to come and attend me. As I had declined the ſervice of either of the young Mrs. Sorlings's, he was extremely ſolicitous, he ſaid, that I ſhould have a ſervant, in whoſe integrity I might confide.

I told him, that you would be ſo kind, as to ſend to engage Hannah, if poſſible.

If any-thing, he ſaid, ſhould prevent Hannah from coming, ſuppoſe he himſelf waited upon Miſs Howe, to deſire her to lend me *her* ſervant till I was provided to my mind?

I ſaid, your mother's high diſpleaſure at the ſtep I had taken (as *ſhe* ſuppoſed, voluntarily) had deprived me of an open aſſiſtance of that ſort from *you*.

He was amazed, ſo much as Mrs. Howe herſelf uſed to admire me, and ſo great an influence as Miſs Howe was ſuppoſed, and deſerved to have over her mother, that Mrs. Howe ſhould take upon herſelf to be ſo much offended with me. He wiſhed, that the man who took ſuch pains to keep up and inflame the paſſions of my father and uncles, were not at the bottom of this miſchief too.

I was afraid, I ſaid, that my brother *was*: or elſe my uncle Antony, I dared to ſay, would not have taken ſuch pains to ſet Mrs. Howe againſt me, as I underſtood he had done.

Since I had declined viſiting Lady Sarah, and Lady Betty, he aſked me, if I would admit of a viſit from his couſin Montague, and accept of a ſervant of hers for the preſent?

That was not, I ſaid, an acceptable propoſal: but I would firſt ſee, if my friends would ſend me my cloaths, that I might not make ſuch a giddy and runaway appearance to any of his relations.

If I pleaſed, he would take another journey to Windſor, to make more particular enquiry amongſt the canons, or in any worthy family.

Were not his objections as to the publickneſs of the place, I aſked him, as ſtrong now as before?

I remember, my dear, in one of your former letters, you mentioned London as the moſt private place to be in*: and I ſaid, that ſince he made ſuch pretences againſt leaving me here, as ſhewed he had no intention to do ſo; and ſince he engaged to go from me, and leave me to purſue my own meaſures, if I were elſewhere; and ſince his preſence made theſe lodgings inconvenient to me; I ſhould not be diſinclined to go to London, did I know any-body there.

As he had ſeveral times propoſed London to me, I expected that he would eagerly have embraced that motion from me. But he took not ready hold of it: yet I thought his eye approved of it.

We are both great watchers of each other's eyes; and indeed ſeem to be more than half-afraid of each other.

He then made a grateful propoſal to me; that I would ſend for my Norton to attend me†.

He ſaw by my eyes, he ſaid, that he had at laſt been happy in an expedient, which would anſwer the wiſhes of us both. 'Why,' ſays he, 'did not I 'think of it before?'—And ſnatching my hand, 'Shall I write, Madam? 'Shall I ſend? Shall I go and fetch 'the worthy woman myſelf?'

After a little conſideration, I told him, that this was *indeed* a grateful motion: but that I apprehended, it would put her to a difficulty, which ſhe would not be able to get over; as it would make a woman of her known prudence appear to countenance a fugitive daughter, in oppoſition to her pa-

* See Vol. II. Page 253.

† The reader is referred to Mr. Lovelace's next letter, for his motives in making the ſeveral propoſals of which the lady is willing to think ſo well.

rents;

rents; and as her coming to me would deprive her of her mother's favour, without it's being in my power to make it up to her.

'O my beloved creature!' said he, *generously enough*, 'let not this be an 'obstacle. I will do every-thing for 'Mrs. Norton you wish to have done. '—Let me go for her.'

More coolly than perhaps his generosity deserved, I told him, it was impossible but I must soon hear from my friends. I should not, mean time, embroil any-body with them. Not Mrs. Norton especially, from whose interest in, and mediation with, my mother, I might expect some good, were she to keep herself in a neutral state: that, besides, the good woman had a mind above her fortune; and would sooner want, than be beholden to any-body improperly.

'*Improperly!*' said he.—'Have not 'persons of merit a *right* to all the benefits conferred upon them?—Mrs. 'Norton is so good a woman, that I 'shall think she lays me under an obli'gation, if she will put it in my power 'to serve her; although she were *not* to 'augment it, by giving me the oppor'tunity, at the same time, of contri'buting to your pleasure and satis'faction.'

How could this man, with such powers of right thinking, be so far depraved by evil habits, as to disgrace his talents by wrong acting?

'Is there not room, after all,' thought I, at the time, 'to hope, (as he so 'lately led me to hope) that the ex'ample it will behove me, for *both* our 'sakes, to endeavour to set him, may 'influence him to a change of manners, 'in which both may find our account?'

'Give me leave, Sir,' said I, 'to 'tell you, there is a strange mixture 'in your mind. You must have taken '*pains* to suppress many good motions 'and reflections, as they arose, or le'vity must have been surprizingly pre'dominant in it.—But as to the sub'ject we were upon, there is no taking 'any resolutions till I hear from my 'friends.'

'Well, Madam, I can only say, I 'would find out some expedient, if I 'could, that should be agreeable to 'you. But since I cannot, will you 'be so good as to tell me, what you 'would wish to have done? Nothing 'in the world but I will comply with, 'excepting leaving you here, at such a 'distance from the place I shall be in, 'if any thing should happen; and in a 'place where my gossiping rascals have 'made me in a manner publick, for 'want of proper cautions at first.

'These vermin,' added he, 'have a 'pride they can hardly rein-in, when 'they serve a man of family. They 'boast of their master's pedigree and 'descent, as if they were related to 'him. Nor is any-thing they know 'of him, or of his affairs, a secret to 'one another, were it a matter that 'would hang him.'

'If so,' thought I, 'men of family 'should take care to give them subjects 'worth boasting of.'

'I am quite at a loss,' said I, 'what 'to do or whither to go. Would you, 'Mr. Lovelace, in earnest, advise me 'to think of going to London?'

And I looked at him with stedfastness. But nothing could I gather from his looks.

'At first, Madam,' said he, 'I was 'for proposing London, as I was then 'more apprehensive of pursuit. But 'as your relations seem cooler on that 'head, I am the more indifferent about 'the place you go to.—So as *you* are 'pleased, so as *you* are easy, I shall be 'happy.'

This indifference of his to London, I cannot but say, made me incline the more to go thither. I asked him (to hear what he would say) if he could recommend me to any *particular place* in London?

No, he said: none that was fit for me, or that I should like. His friend Belford, indeed, had very handsome lodgings near Soho Square, at a relation's, whose wife was a woman of virtue and honour. These, as Mr. Belford was generally in the country, he could borrow till I were better accommodated.

I was resolved to refuse these at the first mention, as I should any other he had named. 'Nevertheless, I will see,' thought I, 'if he has really thoughts 'of these for me. If I break off the 'talk here, and he resume this propo'sal with earnestness in the morning, 'I shall apprehend, that he is less in'different than he seems to be, about 'my going to London; and that he 'has already a lodging in his eye for 'me.—And then I will not go at all.'

But after such generous motions

from him, I really think it a little barbarous to act and behave as if I thought him capable of the blackeſt and moſt ungrateful baſeneſs. But his character, his principles, are ſo faulty!—He is ſo light, ſo vain, ſo various, that there is no certainty that he will be next hour what he is this. Then, my dear, I have no guardian now; no father, no mother! Only God and my vigilance to depend upon. And I have no reaſon to expect a miracle in my favour.

'Well, Sir,' ſaid I, [riſing to leave him] 'ſomething muſt be reſolved upon: 'but I will poſtpone this ſubject till 'to-morrow morning.'

He would fain have engaged me longer; but I ſaid I would ſee him as early as he pleaſed in the morning. He might think of any convenient place in London, or near it, mean time.

And ſo I retired from him. As I do from my pen; hoping for better reſt for the few hours that remain of this night, than I have had of a long time.

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER XXX.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

IN CONTINUATION.

MONDAY MORNING, APRIL 17.

LATE as I went to bed, I have have had very little reſt. Sleep and I have quarrelled; and although I court it, it will not be friends. I hope it's fellow-irreconcileables at Harlowe Place enjoy it's balmy comforts. Elſe, that will be an aggravation of my fault. My brother and ſiſter, I dare ſay, want it not.

Mr. Lovelace, who is an early riſer, as well as I, joined me in the garden about ſix; and, after the uſual ſalutations, aſked me to reſume our laſt night's ſubject. It was upon lodgings at London, he ſaid.

'I think you mentioned one to me, 'Sir—Did you not?'

'Yes, Madam, but' [watching the turn of my countenance] 'rather as 'what you would be welcome to, than 'perhaps approve of.'

'I believe ſo too. To go to town 'upon an *uncertainty*, I own, is not 'agreeable: but to be obliged to any 'perſons of your acquaintance, when 'I want to be thought independent of 'you; and to a perſon eſpecially, to 'whom my friends are to direct to me, 'if they vouchſafe to take notice of me 'at all; is an abſurd thing to mention.'

He did not mention it as what he imagined I would accept, but only to confirm to me what he had ſaid, that he himſelf knew of none fit for me.

'Has not your family, Madam, 'ſome one tradeſman they deal with, 'who has conveniences of this kind? I 'would make it worth ſuch a perſon's 'while, to keep the ſecret of your be-'ing at his houſe. Traders are dealers 'in pins,' ſaid he; 'and will be more 'obliged by a penny cuſtomer, than by 'a pound preſent, becauſe it is in their 'way:—yet will refuſe neither, any 'more than a lawyer or a man of office 'his fee.'

My father's tradeſmen, I ſaid, would no doubt be the firſt employed to find me out. So that *that* propoſal was as wrong as the other. And who is it that a creature ſo lately in favour with all her friends can apply to, in ſuch a ſituation as mine, but muſt be (at leaſt) equally the friends of her relations?

We had a good deal of diſcourſe upon the ſame topick. But, at laſt, the reſult was this—He wrote a letter to one Mr. Doleman, a married man, of fortune and character, (I excepting to Mr. Belford) deſiring him to provide decent apartments ready-furniſhed [*I had told him what they ſhould be*] for a ſingle woman; conſiſting of a bed-chamber; another for a maid-ſervant; with the uſe of a dining-room or parlour. This letter he gave me to peruſe; and then ſealed it up, and diſpatched it away in my preſence, by one of his own ſervants, who having buſineſs in town, is to bring back an anſwer.

I attend the iſſue of it; holding myſelf in readineſs to ſet out for London, unleſs you, my dear, adviſe the contrary.

LETTER XXXI.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

SAT. SUNDAY, MONDAY.

HE gives, in ſeveral letters, the ſubſtance of what is contained in the laſt ſeven of the lady's.

He tells his friend, that calling at the Lawn, in his way to M. Hall, (for

(for he owns that he went not to Windsor) he found the letters from Lady Betty Lawrance, and his cousin Montague, which Mrs. Greme was about sending to him by a special messenger.

He gives the particulars from Mrs. Greme's report, of what passed between the lady and her, as in p. 307, 308. *and makes such declarations to Mrs. Greme of his honour and affection to the lady, as put her upon writing the letter to her sister Sorlings, the contents of which are given in p.* 354.

He then accounts, as follows, for the serious humour he found her in on his return—

UPON such good terms when we parted, I was surprized to find so solemn a brow upon my return, and her charming eyes red with weeping. But when I had understood she had received letters from Miss Howe, it was natural to imagine, that that little devil had put her out of humour with me.

It is easy for me to perceive, that my charmer is more sullen when she receives, and has perused, a letter from that vixen, than at other times. But as the sweet maid shews, even then, more of *passive grief*, than of *active spirit*, I hope she is rather lamenting than plotting. And indeed for what now should she plot? when I am become a reformed man, and am hourly improving in my morals?—Nevertheless I must contrive some way or other to get at their correspondence—Only to see the turn of it; that's all.

But no attempt of this kind must be made yet. A detected invasion in an article so sacred, would ruin me beyond retrieve. Nevertheless it vexes me to the heart to think that she is hourly writing her whole mind on all that passes between her and me, I under the same roof with her, yet kept at such awful distance, that I dare not break into a correspondence, that may perhaps be a means to defeat all my devices.

Would it be *very* wicked, Jack, to knock her messenger o' the head, as he is carrying my beloved's letters, or returning with Miss Howe's?—To attempt to bribe him, and not succeed, would utterly ruin me. And the man seems to be one *used to poverty*, one who can sit down satisfied with it, and enjoy it; contented with hand-to-mouth conveniences, and not aiming to live better to-morrow, than he does to-day, and than he did yesterday. Such a one is above temptation, unless it could come cloathed in the guise of *truth* and *trust*. What likelihood of corrupting a man who has no hope, no ambition?

Yet the rascal has but *half* life, and groans under that. Should I be answerable in his case for a *whole* life?—But hang the fellow! Let him live. Were I a king, or a minister of state, an Antonio Perez*, it were another thing. And yet, on second thoughts, am I not a *rake*, as it is called? And who ever knew a rake stick at any-thing? But thou knowest, Jack, that the greatest half of my wickedness is vapour, to shew my invention; and to prove that I *could* be mischievous if I would.

When he comes to that part, where the lady says, (p. 357.*) in a sarcastick way, waving her hand, and bowing,* 'Excuse me, *good* 'Mr. Lovelace, that I am will-'ing to think the best of my fa-'ther,' *he gives a description of her air and manner, greatly to her advantage; and says—*

I could hardly forbear taking her into my arms upon it, in spite of an expected *tempest*. So much wit, so much beauty, such a lively manner, and such exceeding quickness and penetration! O Belford! she must be nobody's but mine. I can now account for, and justify, Herod's command to destroy his Mariamne, if he returned not alive from his interview with Cæsar: for were I to know, that it were but probable, that any other man were to have this charming creature, even after my death, the very thought would be enough to provoke me to cut that man's throat, were he a prince.

I may be deemed by this lady a rapid, a boisterous lover—and *she* may

* Antonio Perez was first minister of Philip II. King of Spain, by whose command he caused Don Juan de Escovedo to be assassinated: which brought on his own ruin, through the perfidy of his viler master. *Gedde's Tracts.*

like me the less for it: but all the ladies I have met with till now, loved to raise a tempest, and to enjoy it: nor did they ever raise it, but I enjoyed it too!—Lord send us once happily to London!

Mr. Lovelace gives the following account of his rude rapture, when he seized her hand, and put her, by his WILD *manner, as she expresses it, p.* 359. *into such terror.*

Darkness and light, I swore, were convertible at her pleasure: she could make any subject plausible. I was all error: she all perfection. And I snatched her hand, and more than kissed it, I was ready to devour it. There was, I believe, a kind of phrenzy in my manner, which threw her into a panick, like that of Semele perhaps, when the thunderer, in all his majesty, surrounded with ten thousand celestial burning-glasses, was about to scorch her into a cinder.

* *

HAD not my heart misgiven me, and had I not just in time, recollected that she was not so much in my power, but that she might abandon me at her pleasure, having more friends in that house than I had, I should at that moment have made offers, that would have decided all, one way or other.—But, apprehending that I have shewn too much meaning in my passion, I gave it another turn.—But little did the charmer think what an escape either she or I had (as the event might have proved) from the sudden gust of passion, which had like to have blown me into her arms. She was born; I told her, to make me happy and to save a soul * * * *

He gives the rest of his vehement speech pretty nearly in the same words as the lady gives them. And then proceeds—

I saw she was frighted: and she would have had reason, had the scene been London: and that place in London, which I have in view to carry her to. She confirmed me in my apprehension that I had alarmed her too much: she told me, that she saw what my boasted regard to her injunctions was; and she would take proper measures upon it, as I should find: that she was shocked at my violent airs; and if I hoped any favour from her, I must that instant withdraw, and leave her to her recollection.

She pronounced this in such a manner, as shewed she was set upon it; and, having stept out of the *gentle*, the *polite* part I had so newly engaged to act, I thought ready obedience was the best atonement. And indeed I was sensible, from her anger and repulses, that I wanted time myself for recollection. And so I withdrew, with the same veneration as a petitioning subject would withdraw from the presence of his sovereign. But, oh! Belford, had she had but the least patience with me—Had she but made me think, that she would forgive this initiatory ardour—Surely she will not be always thus guarded.

I had not been a moment by myself, but I was sensible, that I had half-forfeited my newly-assumed character. It is exceedingly difficult, thou seest, for an honest man to act in disguises: as the poet says, *Thrust nature back with a pitchfork, it will return.* I recollected, that what she had insisted upon, was really a part of that declared will, before she left her father's house, to which in another case (to humble her) I had pretended to have an inviolable regard. And when I had remembered her words of *taking her measures accordingly*, I was resolved to sacrifice a leg or an arm to make all up again, before she had time to determine upon any new measures.

How seasonably to this purpose have come in my aunt's and cousin's letters!

* *

I HAVE sent in again and again to implore her to admit me to her presence. But she will conclude a letter she is writing to Miss Howe, before she will see me.—I suppose to give an account of what has just passed.

* *

CURSE upon her perverse tyranny! How she makes me wait for an humble audience, though she has done writing some time! A prince begging for her upon his knees should not prevail upon me to spare her if I can but get her to London—Oons! Jack, I believe I have bit my lip through for vexation!—But one day *hers* shall smart for it.

Mr.

Mr. Lovelace beginning a new date, gives an account of his admittance, and of the converſation that followed: which differing only in ſtyle from that the lady gives in the next letter, is omitted.

He collects the lady's expreſſions, which his pride cannot bear: ſuch as, that he is a ſtranger to the decorums which ſhe thought inſeparable from a man of birth and education; *and* that he is not the accompliſhed man he imagines himſelf to be; *and threatens to remember them againſt her.*

He values himſelf upon his propoſals and ſpeeches, which he gives to his friend pretty much to the ſame purpoſe that the lady does in her four laſt letters.

After mentioning his propoſal to her that ſhe would borrow a ſervant from Miſs Howe, till Hannah could come, he writes as follows—

Thou ſeeſt, Belford, that my charmer has no notion, that Miſs Howe herſelf is but a puppet danced upon my wires at ſecond or third hand. To outwit, and impel, as I pleaſe, two *ſuch girls* as theſe, who think they know every thing; and, by taking advantage of the pride and ill-nature of the old ones of both families, to play *them* off likewiſe at the very time they think they are doing me ſpiteful diſpleaſure; what charming revenge! Then the ſweet creature, when I wiſhed that her *brother* was not at the bottom of Mrs. Howe's reſentment, to tell me, that ſhe was afraid he *was*, or her uncle would not have appeared againſt her to that lady!—Pretty dear! how innocent!

But don't think me the *cauſe* neither of her family's malice and reſentment. It is in all their hearts. I work but with their materials. They, if left to their own wicked direction, would perhaps expreſs their revenge by fire and faggot; that is to ſay, by the private dagger, or by lord chief juſtices warrants, by law, and ſo-forth: I only point the lightning, and teach it where to dart, without the thunder. In other words, I only guide the effects: the cauſe is in their malignant hearts: and while I am doing a little miſchief, I prevent a great deal.

Thus he exults on her mentioning London—

I wanted her to propoſe London herſelf. This made me again mention Windſor. If you would have a woman do one thing, you muſt always propoſe another, and that the very contrary. The ſex! the very ſex! as I hope to be ſaved!—Why, Jack, they lay a man under a neceſſity to deal doubly with them! And, when they find themſelves outwitted, they cry out upon an honeſt fellow, who has been too hard for them at their own weapons.

I could hardly contain myſelf. My heart was at my throat.—'Down, 'down,' ſaid I to myſelf, 'exuberant 'exultation!' A ſudden cough befriended me; I again turned to her, all as *indifferenced over* as a girl at the firſt long-expected queſtion, who waits for two more. I heard out the reſt of her ſpeech: and when ſhe had done, inſtead of ſaying any-thing to her of London, I adviſed her *to ſend for her Mrs. Norton.*

As I *knew* ſhe would be afraid of lying under obligation, I could have propoſed to do ſo much for the good woman and her ſon, as would have made her reſolve, that I ſhould do nothing: this, however, not merely to avoid expence. But there was no ſuch thing as allowing of the preſence of Mrs. Norton. I might as well have had her mother or her aunt Hervey with her. Hannah, had ſhe been able to come, and had ſhe actually come, I could have done well enough with. What do I keep fellows idling in the country for, but to fall in love, and even to marry thoſe whom I would have them to marry? Nor, upon ſecond thoughts, would the preſence of her Norton, or of her aunt, or even of her mother, have ſaved the dear creature, had I decreed her fall.

How unequal is a modeſt woman to the adventure, when ſhe throws herſelf into the power of a rake!—Punctilio will, at any time, ſtand for reaſon with ſuch an one. She cannot break through a well-teſted modeſty. None but the impudent little rogues, who can name the parſon and the church before you think of either, and undreſs and go to bed before you the next hour, ſhould think of running away with a man.

* *

I AM in the right train now. Every hour, I doubt not, will give me an encreaſing

creasing interest in the affections of this proud beauty. I have just carried *unpoliteness* far enough to *make her afraid of me*; and to shew her, that I am *no whiner*. Every instance of politeness, now, will give me double credit with her. My next point will be to make her acknowledge a *lambent* flame, a preference of me to all other men, at least: and then my happy hour is not far off. An *acknowledged* reciprocality in love sanctifies every little freedom: and little freedoms beget greater. And if she call me *ungenerous*, I can call her *cruel*. The sex love to be called cruel. Many a time have I complained of cruelty, even in the act of yielding, because I knew it gratified the fair-one's pride.

Mentioning that he had only hinted at Mr. Belford's lodgings as an instance to confirm what he had told her, that he knew of none in London fit for her, he says—

I had a mind to alarm her with something fartherest from my purpose; for (as much as she disliked my motion) I intend nothing by it: Mrs. Osgood is too pious a woman: and would have been more *her* friend than *mine*.

I had a view, moreover, to give her an high opinion of her own sagacity. I love, when I dig a pit, to have my prey tumble in with secure feet, and open eyes: then a man can look down upon her, with an '*O-ho, charmer, how came you there?*'

MONDAY, APRIL 17.

I HAVE just now received a fresh piece of intelligence from my agent, honest Joseph Leman. Thou knowest the history of poor Miss Betterton of Nottingham. James Harlowe is plotting to revive the resentments of her family against me. The Harlowes took great pains, some time ago, to endeavour to get to the bottom of that story. But now the foolish devils are resolved to do something in it, if they can. My head is working to make this booby 'squire a plotter, and a clever fellow, in order to turn his plots to my advantage, supposing his sister shall aim to keep me *at arms-length when in town, and to send me from her*. But I will, in proper time, let thee see Joseph's letter, and what I shall answer to it*. To know in time a designed mischief, is, with me, to dissappoint it, and to turn it upon the contriver's head.

Joseph is plaguy squeamish again; but I know he only intends by his qualms to swell his merits with me. O Belford, Belford! what a vile corruptible rogue, whether in poor or rich, is human nature!

LETTER XXXII.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

[IN ANSWER TO LETTERS XXIV.—XXX. INCLUSIVE.]

TUESDAY, APRIL 18.

YOU have a most implacable family. Another visit from your uncle Antony has not only confirmed my mother an enemy to our correspondence, but has almost put her upon treading in their steps.

But to other subjects:

You plead generously for Mr. Hickman. Perhaps, with regard to him, I may have done, as I have often done in singing—Begun a note or key too high; and yet, rather than begin again, proceed, though I strain my voice, or spoil my tune. But this is evident, the man is the more observant for it; and you have taught me, that the spirit which is the humbler for ill usage, will be insolent upon better. So, good and grave Mr. Hickman, keep your distance a little longer, I beseech you. You have erected an altar to me; and I hope you will not refuse to bow to it.

But you ask me, If I would treat Mr. Lovelace, were he to be in Mr. Hickman's place, as I do Mr. Hickman? Why really, my dear, I believe I should not.—I have been very sagely considering this point of behaviour (in general) on both sides in courtship; and I will very candidly tell you the result. I have concluded, that politeness, even to excess, is necessary on the men's part, to bring us to listen to their first addresses, in order to induce us to bow our necks to a yoke so unequal. But, upon my conscience, I very much doubt whether a little intermingled insolence is not re-

* See Letters XLIII. XLIV. of this Volume.

quisite

quiſite from them, to keep up that intereſt, when once it has got footing. Men muſt not let us ſee, that we can make fools of them. And I think, that *ſmooth* love; that is to ſay, a paſſion without rubs; in other words, a paſſion without paſſion; is like a ſleepy ſtream that is hardly ſeen to give motion to a ſtraw. So that, ſometimes to make us fear, and even, for a ſhort ſpace, to *hate* the wretch, is productive of the *contrary* extreme.

If this be ſo, Lovelace, than whom no man was ever more polite and obſequious at the *beginning*, has hit the very point. For his turbulence *ſince*, his readineſs to offend, and his equal readineſs to humble himſelf, (as he is known to be a man of ſenſe, and of courage too) muſt keep a woman's paſſion alive; and at laſt, tire her into a non-reſiſtance that ſhall make her as paſſive as a tyrant-huſband would wiſh her to be.

I verily think, that the different behaviour of our two heroes to their heroines makes out this doctrine to demonſtration. I am ſo much accuſtomed, for my own part, to Hickman's whining, creeping, ſubmiſſive courtſhip, that I now expect nothing but whine and cringe from him; and am ſo little moved with his nonſenſe, that I am frequently forced to go to my harpſichord, to keep me awake, and to ſilence his humdrum. Whereas Lovelace keeps up the ball with a witneſs, and all his addreſs and converſation is one continual game at raquet.

Your frequent quarrels and reconciliations verify this obſervation: and I really believe, that, could Hickman have kept my attention alive after the Lovelace manner, only that he had preſerved his morals, I ſhould have married the man by this time. But then he muſt have *ſet out* accordingly. For now he can never, never recover himſelf, that's certain; but muſt be a dangler to the end of the courtſhip-chapter; and, what is ſtill worſe for him, a paſſive to the end of his life.

'Poor Hickman!' perhaps you'll ſay.

I have been called your echo—'Poor 'Hickman!' ſay I.

You wonder, my dear, that Mr. Lovelace took not notice to you overnight of the letters of Lady Betty, and his couſin. I don't like his keeping ſuch a material and *relative* circumſtance, as I may call it, one moment from you. By his communicating the contents of them to you next day, when you was angry with him, it looks as if he witheld them for *occaſional pacifiers*; and if ſo, muſt he not have had a forethought that he might give you *cauſe* for anger? Of all the circumſtances that have happened ſince you have been with him, I think I like this the leaſt. This alone, my dear, ſmall as it might look to an *indifferent* eye, in *mine* warrants all your caution. Yet I think, that Mrs. Greme's letter to her ſiſter Sorlings; his repeated motions for Hannah's attendance; and for that of one of the widow Sorlings's daughters; and, above all, for that of Mrs. Norton; are agreeable counterbalances. Were it not for theſe circumſtances, I ſhould have ſaid a great deal more of the other. Yet what a fooliſh fellow, to let you know over-night that he *had* ſuch letters?—I can't tell what to make of him.

I am pleaſed with the contents of theſe ladies letters. And the more, as I have cauſed the family to be again ſounded, and find that they are all as deſirous as ever of your alliance.

They really are (every one of them) your very great admirers. And, as for Lord M. he is ſo much pleaſed with you, and with the confidence, as he calls it, which you have repoſed in his nephew, that he vows he will diſinherit him, if he reward it not as he ought. You muſt take care, that you loſe not both families.

I hear Mrs. Norton is enjoined, as ſhe values the favour of the *other* family, not to correſpond either with you or with me—Poor creatures!—But they are your—Yet they are not your *relations* neither, I believe. Had you had any other nurſe, I ſhould have concluded you had been changed. I ſuffer by their low malice—Excuſe me therefore.

You really hold this man to his good behaviour with more ſpirit than I thought you miſtreſs of; eſpecially when I judged of you by that meekneſs which you always contended for, as the proper diſtinction of the female character; and by the love which (think as you pleaſe) you certainly have for him. You may rather be proud of than angry at the imputation; ſince you are the only woman I ever knew, read, or heard of, whoſe love

love was so much governed by her prudence. But when once the indifference of the husband takes place of the ardour of the lover, it will be *your* turn: and, if I am not mistaken, this man, who is the only self-admirer I ever knew who was not a coxcomb, will rather in his day expect homage than pay it.

Your handsome husbands, my dear, make a wife's heart ache very often: and though you are as fine a person of a woman, at the least, as he is of a man, he will take too much delight in *himself* to think himself more indebted to your favour, than you are to his distinction and preference of you. But no man, take your finer mind with your very fine person, can deserve you. So you must be contented, should your merit be under-rated; since that *must* be so, marry whom you will. Perhaps you will think I indulge these sort of reflections against your Narcissuses of men, to keep my mother's choice for me of Hickman in countenance with myself—I don't know but there is something in it; at least, enough to have given birth to the reflection.

I think there can be no objection to your going to London. There, as in the centre, you will be in the way of hearing from every-body, and sending to any-body. And then you will put all his sincerity to the test, *as to his promised absence*, and such-like.

But indeed, my dear, I think you have nothing for it but marriage. You may try (that you may say you *have* tried) what your relations can be brought to: but the moment they refuse your propofals, submit to the yoke, and make the best of it. He will be a savage indeed, if he makes you speak out. Yet, it is my opinion, that you *must* bend a little; for he cannot bear to be thought slightly of.

'T is was one of his speeches once; I believe designed for me—'A woman 'who means one day to favour her lover 'with her hand, should shew the world, 'for her *own* sake, that she distinguishes 'him from the common herd.'

Shall I give you another fine sentence of his, and in the true libertine stile, as he spoke it, throwing out his challenging hand?—D—n him, if he would marry the first princess on earth, if he but thought she balanced a minute in her choice of *him*, or of an *emperor*.

All the world, in short, expect you to have this man. They think, that you left your father's house for this very purpose. The longer the ceremony is delayed, the worse appearance it will have in the world's eye. And it will not be the fault of some of your relations, if a slur be not thrown upon your reputation, while you continue unmarried. Your uncle Antony, in particular, speaks rough and vile things, grounded upon the morals of his *brother Orson*. But hitherto your admirable character has antidoted the poison; the detractor is despised, and every-one's indignation raised against him.

I have written through many interruptions: and you will see the first sheet creased and rumpled, occasioned by putting it into my bosom, on my mother's sudden coming upon me. We have had one very pretty debate, I will assure you; but it is not worth while to trouble you with the particulars.—But upon my word—No matter though.

Your Hannah cannot attend you. The poor girl left her place about a fortnight ago, on account of a rheumatick disorder, which has confined her to her room ever since. She burst into tears, when Kitty carried to her your desire of having her with you; and called herself doubly unhappy, that she could not wait upon a mistress whom she so dearly loved.

Had my mother answered my wishes, I should have been sorry Mr. Lovelace had been the *first* proposer of my Kitty for your attendant, till Hannah could come. To be altogether among strangers, and a stranger to attend you every time you remove, is a very disagreeable thing. But your considerateness and bounty will make you faithful ones wherever you go.

You must take your own way: but if you suffer any inconvenience, either as to cloaths or money, that it is in my power to remedy, I will never forgive you. My mother (if *that* be your objection) need not know any-thing of the matter.

We have all our defects: we have often regretted the particular fault, which though in venerable characters, we must have been blind not to see.

I remember what you once said to me; and the caution was good: 'Let 'us, my Nancy,' were your words; 'let us, who have not the same failings

'as

'as thoſe we cenſure, guard againſt 'other and *greater* in ourſelves.' Nevertheleſs I muſt needs tell you, that my mother has vexed me a little very lately, by ſome inſtances of her jealous narrowneſs. I will mention one of them, though I did not intend it.—She wanted to borrow thirty guineas of me: *only* while ſhe got a note changed. I ſaid, I could lend her but eight or ten. Eight or ten would not do: ſhe thought I was much richer. I could have told her, I was much cunninger than to let her know my ſtock; which, on a review, I find ninety-five guineas; and all of them moſt heartily at your ſervice.

I believe your uncle Tony put her upon this wiſe project; for ſhe was *out of caſh* in an hour after he left her. If he did, you will judge that they intend to diſtreſs you. If it will provoke *you* to demand your own in a legal way, I wiſh they would; ſince their putting you upon that courſe will juſtify the neceſſity of your leaving them. And as it is not for your credit to own, that you were tricked away contrary to your intention, this would afford a reaſon for your going off, that I ſhould make very good uſe of. You'll ſee, that I approve of Lovelace's advice upon this ſubject. I am not willing to allow the weight to your anſwer to him on that head, which perhaps ought to be allowed it*.

You muſt be the leſs ſurprized at the inventions of this man, becauſe of his uncommon talents. Whatever he had turned his head to, he would have excelled in; or been (or done things) extraordinary. He is ſaid to be revengeful: a very bad quality! I believe, indeed, he is a devil in every-thing but his foot—This, therefore, is my repeated advice—Provoke him not too much againſt yourſelf: but unchain him, and let him looſe upon your ſiſter's vile Betty, and your brother's Joſeph Leman. This is reſenting *low*: but I know to whom I write, or elſe I would go a good deal *higher*, I'll aſſure you.

Your next, I ſuppoſe, will be from London. Pray direct it, and your future letters, till further notice, to Mr. Hickman, at his own houſe. He is entirely devoted to you. Don't take ſo heavily my mother's partiality and prejudices. I hope I am paſt a baby.

Heaven preſerve you, and make you as happy as I think you deſerve to be, prays *your ever-affectionate*

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XXXIII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

WEDN. MORN. APRIL 19.

I AM glad, my dear friend, that you approve of my removal to London.

The diſagreement between your mother and you gives me inexpreſſible affliction. I hope I think you both more unhappy than you are. But I beſeech you let me know the particulars of the debate you call *a very pretty one*. I am well acquainted with your dialect. When I am informed of the whole, let your mother have been ever ſo ſevere upon me, I ſhall be eaſier a great deal.—Faulty people ſhould rather deplore the occaſion they have given for anger than reſent it.

If I am to be obliged to any-body in England for money, it ſhall be to you. Your mother need not know of your kindneſs to me, you ſay—But ſhe *muſt* know it, if it be done, and if ſhe challenge my beloved friend upon it; for would you either falſify or prevaricate?—I wiſh your mother could be made eaſy on this head.—Forgive me, my dear.—But I know—Yet once ſhe had a better opinion of me.—O my inconſiderate raſhneſs!—Excuſe me once more, I pray you.—Pride, when it is *native*, will ſhew itſelf ſometimes in the midſt of mortifications—But my ſtomach is down already.

* *

I AM unhappy that I cannot have my worthy Hannah. I am ſorry for the poor creature's illneſs as for my own diſappointment by it. Come, my dear Miſs Howe, ſince you preſs me to be beholden to you; and would think me proud if I abſolutely refuſed your favour; pray be ſo good as to ſend her two guineas in my name.

If I have nothing for it, as you ſay, but matrimony, it yields a little comfort, that his relations do not deſpiſe *the fugitive*, as perſons of their rank and quality-pride might be ſuppoſed to do, for having *been* a fugitive.

* See Page 363.

But, O my cruel, thrice cruel uncle! to ſuppoſe—But my heart checks my pen, and will not let it proceed, on an intimation ſo extremely ſhocking as that which he ſuppoſes!—Yet, if thus they have been perſuaded, no wonder if they are irreconcileable.

This is all my hard-hearted brother's doings!—His ſurmiſings—God forgive him—Prays his injured ſiſter!

LETTER XXXIV.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

THURSDAY, APRIL 20.

MR. Lovelace's ſervant is already returned with an anſwer from his friend Mr. Doleman, who has taken pains in his enquiries, and is very particular. Mr. Lovelace brought me the letter as ſoon as he had read it: and as he now knows that I acquaint you with every-thing that offers, I deſired him to let me ſend it to you for your peruſal. Be pleaſed to return it by the firſt opportunity. You will ſee by it, that his friends in town have a notion, that we are actually married.

'TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

'TUESDAY NIGHT, APRIL 18.

'DEAR SIR,

'I Am extremely rejoiced to hear, 'that we ſhall ſo ſoon have you in 'town, after ſo long an abſence. You 'will be the more welcome ſtill, if 'what report ſays be true; which is, 'that you are *actually married* to the 'fair lady upon whom we have heard 'you make ſuch encomiums. Mrs. 'Doleman, and my ſiſter, both wiſh 'you joy if you are; and joy upon your 'near proſpect if you are not.

'I have been in town for this week 'paſt, to get help, if I could, from my 'paralytic complaints; and am in a 'courſe for them. Which, nevertheleſs, did not prevent me from making 'the deſired enquiries. This is the 'reſult.

'You may have a firſt floor, well 'furniſhed, at a mercer's in Bedford 'Street, Covent Garden, with conveniences for ſervants: and theſe either 'by the quarter or month. The terms 'according to the conveniences required.

'Mrs. Doleman has ſeen lodgings in 'Norfolk Street, and others in Cecil 'Street; but though the proſpects to 'the Thames and Surry Hills look inviting from both theſe ſtreets, yet I 'ſuppoſe they are too near the city.

'The owner of thoſe in Norfolk 'Street would have half the houſe go 'together. It would be too much for 'your deſcription therefore: and I 'ſuppoſe, that when you think fit to '*declare your marriage*, you will hardly be in lodgings.

'Thoſe in Cecil Street are neat and 'convenient. The owner is a widow 'of good character; but ſhe inſiſts, 'that you take them for a twelvemonth 'certain.

'You may have good accommodations in Dover Street, at a widow's, 'the relict of an officer in the guards, 'who dying ſoon after he had purchaſed his commiſſion, (to which he 'had a good title by ſervice, and which 'coſt him moſt part of what he had) ſhe '*was obliged to lett lodgings*.

'This may poſſibly be an objection. 'But ſhe is very careful, ſhe ſays, that 'ſhe takes no lodgers, but of *figure* 'and *reputation*. She rents two good 'houſes, diſtant from each other, only 'joined by a *large handſome paſſage*. 'The *inner-houſe* is the genteeleſt, and 'very elegantly furniſhed; but you 'may have the uſe of a very handſome 'parlour in the *outer-houſe*, if you 'chuſe to look into the ſtreet.

'A little garden belongs to the inner-houſe, in which the old gentlewoman 'has diſplayed a true female fancy; 'having crammed it with vaſes, flower-pots, and figures, without number.

'As theſe lodgings ſeemed to me the 'moſt likely to pleaſe you, I was more 'particular in my enquiries about them. 'The apartments ſhe has to lett are in 'the inner-houſe: they are a dining-room, two neat parlours, a with-drawing-room, two or three handſome bed-chambers; one with a pretty 'light cloſet in it, which looks into 'the little garden, all furniſhed in 'taſte.

'A *dignified clergyman*, his *wife*, 'and *maiden-daughter*, were the laſt 'who lived in them. They have but 'lately quitted them, on his being preſented to a conſiderable church preferment in Ireland. The gentlewoman ſays that he took the lodgings 'but for *three months* certain; but liked

'them

'them and *her usage* so well, that he 'continued in them *two years*; and 'left them with regret, though on so 'good an account. She bragged, that 'this was the way of all the lodgers she 'ever had, who staid with her *four* 'times as long as they at first intended.

'I had some knowledge of the co-'lonel, who was always looked upon 'as a man of honour. His relict I 'never saw before. I think she has a '*masculine air*, and is a *little forbidding* 'at first: but when I saw her behaviour 'to two agreeable *maiden gentlewomen*, 'her husband's nieces, whom, for *that* 'reason, she calls *doubly* hers, and heard 'their praises of *her*, I could impute 'her very bulk to good-humour; since 'we seldom see your sour, peevish 'people, plump. She lives *reputably*, 'and is, as I find, *aforehand* in the 'world.

'If these, or any other of the lodg-'ings I have mentioned, be not alto-'gether to your lady's mind, she may 'continue in them *the less while*, and 'chuse *others for herself*.

'The widow consents that you shall 'take them for a *month only*, and *what* 'of them you please. The terms, she 'says, she will not fall out upon, when 'she knows what your lady expects, 'and what *her* servants are to do, or '*yours* will undertake; for she observed 'that servants are generally worse to 'deal with, than their masters or mis-'tresses.

'The lady may board or not, as she 'pleases.

'As we *suppose you married*, but that 'you have reason, from family-differ-'ences, to keep it private for the pre-'sent, I thought it not amiss to hint as 'much to the widow, (but as *uncer-'tainty*, however;) and asked her, if she 'could, in that case, accommodate you 'and your servants, as well as the lady 'and hers? She said, she could; and 'wished by all means, it were to be so; 'since the circumstance of a person's '*being single*, if not as well recom-'mended as this lady, was *one of her* 'usual exceptions.

'If none of these lodgings please, 'you need not doubt very handsome 'ones in or near Hanover Square, So-'ho Square, Golden Square, or in 'some of the new streets about Gros-'venor Square. And Mrs. Doleman, 'her sister, and myself, most cordially 'join to offer to your good lady the 'best accommodations we can make 'for her at Uxbridge, (and also for 'you, if you are the happy man we 'wish you to be) till she fits herself 'more to her mind.

'Let me add, that the lodgings at 'the mercer's, those in Cecil Street, 'those at the widow's in Dover Street, 'any of them, may be entered upon 'at a day's warning. I am, my dear 'Sir, *your sincere and affectionate friend* 'and servant,

'THO. DOLEMAN.'

You will easily guess, my dear, when you have read the letter, *which* lodgings I made choice of. But first to try him (as in so material a point I thought I could not be too circumspect) I seemed to prefer those in Norfolk Street, for the very reason the writer gives why he thought I would *not*; that is to say, for it's neighbourhood to a city so well governed as London is said to be. Nor should I have disliked a lodging in the heart of it, having heard but indifferent accounts of the liberties sometimes taken at the other end of the town.—Then seeming to incline to the lodgings in Cecil Street—Then to the mercer's. But he made no visible preference: and when I asked his opinion of the widow-gentlewoman's, he said, He thought those the most to my taste and convenience. But as he hoped that I would think lodgings necessary but for a very little while, he knew not which to give his vote for.

I then fixed upon the widow's; and he has written accordingly to Mr. Doleman, making my compliments to his lady and sister, for their kind offer.

I am to have the dining-room, the bed-chamber with the light closet, (of which, if I stay any time at the widow's, I shall make great use) and a servant's room; and we propose to set out on Saturday morning. As for a maid-servant, poor Hannah's illness is a great disappointment to me: but, as he observes, I can make the widow satisfaction for one of hers, till I can get a servant to my mind. And you know, I want not much attendance.

* *

MR. Lovelace has just now, of his own accord, given me five guineas for poor Hannah. I send them inclosed. Be so good as to cause them to be con-

veyed to her; and to let her know from whom they came.

He has obliged me much by this little mark of his conſiderateneſs. Indeed I have had the better opinion of him ever ſince he propoſed her return to me.

* *

I HAVE juſt now *another* inſtance of his conſiderateneſs. He came to me, and ſaid, that, on ſecond thoughts, he could not bear that I ſhould go up to town without ſome attendant, were it but for the look of the thing to the London widow and her nieces, who, according to his friend's account, *lived ſo genteelly*; and eſpecially *as I required him to leave me ſoon after I arrived there*, and ſo would be left alone among ſtrangers. He therefore thought, that I might engage Mrs. Sorlings to lend me one of her two maids, or let one of her daughters go up with me, and ſtay till I were provided. And if the latter, the young gentlewoman, no doubt, would be glad of ſo good an opportunity to ſee the curioſities of the town, and would be a proper attendant on the ſame occaſions.

I told him, as I had done before, that the two young gentlewomen were ſo equally uſeful in their way, and ſervants in a buſy farm were ſo little to be ſpared, that I ſhould be loth to take them off their laudable employments. Nor ſhould I think much of diverſions for one while; and ſo the leſs want an attendant out of doors.

And now, my dear, leſt any-thing ſhould happen, in ſo variable a ſituation as mine, to over-cloud my proſpects, (which at preſent are more promiſing than ever yet they have been ſince I quitted Harlowe Place) I will ſnatch the opportunity to ſubſcribe myſelf *your not unhoping, and ever-obliged friend and ſervant*,

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER XXXV.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

THURSDAY, APRIL 20.

HE begins with communicating to him the letter he wrote to Mr. Doleman, to procure ſuitable lodgings in town, and which he ſent away by the lady's approbation: and then gives him a copy of the anſwer to it: (*See page* 376, 377) *upon which he thus expreſſes himſelf:*

THOU knoweſt the widow; thou knoweſt her nieces; thou knoweſt the lodgings: and didſt thou ever read a letter more artfully couched, than this of Tom Doleman? Every poſſible objection anticipated! Every accident provided againſt! Every tittle of it plot-proof!

Who could forbear ſmiling, to ſee my charmer, like a farcical dean and chapter, chuſe what was before choſen for her; and ſagaciouſly (as *they* go in form to prayers, that Heaven would direct their choice) pondering upon the different propoſals, as if ſhe would make me believe, ſhe had a mind for *ſome other?* The dear ſly rogue looking upon me, too, with a view to diſcover ſome emotion in me. Emotions I had; but I can tell her, that they lay deeper than her eye could reach, though it had been a ſun-beam.

No confidence in me, fair-one! None at all, 'tis plain. Thou wilt not, if I were inclined to change my views, encourage me by a generous reliance on my honour!—And ſhall it be ſaid, that I, a maſter of arts in love, ſhall be over-matched by ſo unpractiſed a novice?

But to ſee the charmer ſo far ſatisfied with my contrivance, as to borrow my friend's letter, in order to ſatisfy Miſs Howe likewiſe!

Silly little rogues! to walk out into by-paths on the ſtrength of their own judgment!—When nothing but *experience* can enable them to diſappoint us, and teach them grandmother-wiſdom! When they *have* it indeed, then may they ſit down, like ſo many Caſſandra's, and preach caution to others; who will as little mind *them*, as they did *their* inſtructreſſes, whenever a fine handſome confident young fellow, ſuch a one as thou knoweſt who, comes acroſs them.

But, Belford, didſt thou not mind that ſly rogue Doleman's naming *Dover Street* for the widow's place of abode?—What doſt think could be meant by that?—'Tis impoſſible thou ſhouldſt gueſs. So, not to puzzle thee about it, ſuppoſe the *widow Sinclair's in Dover Street* ſhould be enquired after

ter by some officious person in order to come at characters; [Miss Howe is as *fly* as the devil, and as *busy* to the full] and neither such a name, nor such a house, can be found in that street, nor a house to answer the description; then will not the keenest hunter in England be at a fault?

'But how wilt thou do,' methinks thou askest, 'to hinder the lady from 'resenting the fallacy, and mistrusting 'thee the more on that account, when 'she finds it out to be in another 'street?'

Pho! never mind that: either I shall have a way for it; or we shall thoroughly understand one another by that time; or if we don't, she'll know enough of me, not to wonder at *such* a peccadillo.

'But how wilt thou hinder the lady 'from apprizing her friend of the real 'name?'

She must first know it herself, monkey, must she not?

'Well, but, how wilt thou do to 'hinder her from knowing the street, 'and her friend from directing letters 'thither; which will be the same 'thing as if the name were known?'

Let me alone for that too.

If thou further objectest, that Tom Doleman is too great a dunce to write such a letter in answer to mine—Canst thou not imagine, that, in order to save honest Tom all this trouble, I, who know the town so well, could send him a copy of what he should write, and leave him nothing to do, but transcribe?

What now sayest thou to *me*, Belford?

And suppose I had designed this task of enquiry for thee; and suppose the lady excepted against thee for no other reason in the world, but because of my value for thee? What sayest thou to the *lady*, Jack?

This it is to have leisure upon my hands!—What a matchless plotter thy friend!—Stand by, and let me swell!—I am already as big as an elephant; and ten times wiser!—Mightier too by far!—Have I not reason to snuff the moon with my proboscis?—Lord help thee for a poor, for a very poor creature!—Wonder not, that I despise thee heartily; since the man who is disposed immoderately to exalt himself, cannot do it but by despising every-body else in proportion.

I shall make good use of the *Dolemanick* hint of *being married*. But I will not tell thee all at once. Nor, indeed, have I thoroughly digested that part of my plot. When a general must regulate himself by the motions of a watchful adversary, how can he say before-hand what he will, or what he will not, do?

'Widow SINCLAIR, didst thou 'not say, Lovelace?'

Ay, SINCLAIR, Jack!—Remember the name! SINCLAIR, I repeat. She *has* no other. And her features being broad, and full-blown, I will suppose her to be of Highland extraction; as her husband the colonel [*Mind that too*] was a Scot, as brave, as honest.

I never forget the *minutiæ* in my contrivances. In all matters that admit of doubt, the *minutiæ* closely attended to, and provided for, are of more service than a thousand oaths, vows, and protestations, made to supply the neglect of them, especially when jealousy has made it's way in the working mind.

Thou wouldst wonder if thou knewest one half of my *providences*. To give thee but one—I have already been so good as to send up a list of books to be procured for the lady's closet, mostly at *second hand*. And thou knowest, that the women there are all well read. But I will not anticipate—Besides, it looks as if I were afraid of leaving any-thing to my old friend CHANCE; which has many a time been an excellent second to me; and ought not to be affronted or despised; especially by one, who has the art of making unpromising incidents turn out in his favour.

LETTER XXXVI.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19.

I Have a piece of intelligence to give you, which concerns you much to know.

Your brother having been assured, that you are not married, has taken a resolution to find you out, way-lay you, and carry you off. A friend of his, a captain of a ship, undertakes to get you on ship-board; and to sail away with you, either to Hull or Leith, in the

the way to one of your brother's houſes.

They are very wicked: for in ſpite of your virtue they conclude you to be *ruined*. But if they can be aſſured when they have you, that you are not, they will ſecure you till they can bring you out Mrs. Solmes. Mean time, in order to give Mr. Lovelace full employment, they talk of a proſecution which will be ſet up againſt him, for ſome crime they have got a notion of, which they think, if it do not coſt him his life, will make him fly his country.

This is very early news. Miſs Bell told it in confidence, and with mighty triumph over Lovelace, to Miſs Lloyd; who is at preſent her favourite; though as much your admirer as ever. Miſs Lloyd, being very apprehenſive of the miſchief which might follow ſuch an attempt, told it to me, with leave to apprize you privately of it—And yet neither ſhe nor I would be ſorry perhaps, if Lovelace were to be fairly hanged—that is to ſay, if *you*, my dear, had no objection to it. But we cannot bear that ſuch an admirable creature ſhould be made the tennis-ball of two violent ſpirits—Much leſs, that you ſhould be ſeized, and expoſed to the brutal treatment of wretches who have no bowels.

If you can engage Mr. Lovelace to keep his temper upon it, I think you ſhould acquaint him with it; but not to mention Miſs Lloyd. Perhaps his wicked agent may come at the intelligence, and reveal it to him. But leave it to your own diſcretion to do as you think fit in it. All my concern is, that this daring and fooliſh project, if carried on, will be a means of throwing you more into his power than ever. But as it will convince you, that there can be no hope of a reconciliation, I wiſh you were actually married, let the cauſe for the proſecution hinted at be what it will, ſhort of murder or a rape.

Your Hannah was very thankful for your kind preſent. She heaped a thouſand bleſſings upon you for it. She has Mr. Lovelace's too by this time.

I am pleaſed with Mr. Hickman, I can tell you:—for he has ſent her two guineas by the perſon who carries Mr. Lovelace's five, as from an unknown hand: nor am I, or you, to know it. But he does a great many things of this ſort; and is as ſilent as the night in his charities; for nobody knows of them, till the gratitude of the benefited will not let them be concealed. He is now-and-then my almoner, and I believe always adds to my little benefactions.

But his time is not come to be praiſed to his face for theſe things; nor does he ſeem to want *that* encouragement.

The man has certainly a good mind. Nor can we expect in one man every good quality. But he is really a ſilly fellow, my dear, to trouble his head about me, when he ſees how much I deſpiſe his whole ſex; and muſt of courſe make a common man look like a fool, were he not to make *himſelf* look like one, by wiſhing to pitch his tent ſo oddly. Our likings and diſlikings, as I have often thought, are ſeldom governed by prudence, or with a view to happineſs. The eye, my dear, the wicked eye—has ſuch a ſtrict alliance with the heart—And both have ſuch enmity to the judgment!—What an unequal union, the mind and body! All the ſenſes, like the family at Harlowe Place, in a confederacy againſt that which would animate, and give honour to the whole, were it allowed it's proper precedence.

Permit me, I beſeech you, before you go to London, to ſend you forty-eight guineas. I mention that ſum to oblige you, becauſe, by accepting back the two to Hannah, I will hold you indebted to me fifty.—Surely *this* will induce you! You know that I cannot want the money. I told you, that I have near double that ſum; and that the half of it is more than my mother knows I am miſtreſs of. You are afraid, that my mother will queſtion me on this ſubject; and then you think I muſt own the truth—But little as I love equivocation, and little as you would allow of it in your Anna Howe, it is hard, if I cannot (were I to be put to it ever ſo cloſely) find ſomething to ſay, that would bring me off, and not impeach my veracity. With ſo little money as you have, what can you do at ſuch a place as London?—You don't know what occaſion you may have for meſſengers, intelligence, and ſuch-like. If you don't oblige me, I ſhall not think your ſtomach ſo much down as you ſay it is, and as, in this one particular, I think it ought to be.

As to the ſtate of things between my mother

mother and me, you know enough of her temper, not to need to be told, that she never espouses or resents with indifference. Yet will she not remember, that I am *her* daughter. No, truly, I am all my *papa's girl*.

She was very sensible, surely, of the violence of my poor father's temper, that she can so long remember *that*, when acts of tenderness and affection seem quite forgotten. Some daughters would be tempted to think, that controul sat very heavy upon a mother who can endeavour to exert the power she has over a child, and regret, for years after death, that she had not the same over a husband.

If this manner of expression becomes not me, of my mother, the fault will be somewhat extenuated by the love I always bore to my father, and by the reverence I shall ever pay to his memory: for he was a fond father, and perhaps would have been as tender a husband, had not my mother and he been too much of a temper to agree.

The misfortune was, in short, that, when *one* was out of humour, the *other* would be so too: yet neither of their tempers *comparatively* bad. Notwithstanding all which, I did not imagine, girl as I was in my father's life-time, that my mother's part of the yoke sat so heavy upon her neck as she gives me room to think it did whenever she is pleased to disclaim *her* part of me.

Both parents, as I have often thought, should be very careful, if they would secure to themselves the undivided love of their children, that, of all things, they should avoid such *durable* contentions with each other, as should distress their children in chusing their party, when they would be glad to reverence *both* as they ought.

But here is the thing: there is not a better manager of her affairs in the sex, than my mother; and I believe a *notable* wife is more impatient of controul, than an *indolent* one. An indolent one, perhaps, thinks she has something to *compound* for; while women of the other character, I suppose, know too well their own significance to think highly of that of any-body else. All must be their own way. In one word, because they are *useful*, they will be *more* than useful.

I do assure you, my dear, were I a man, and a man who loved my quiet, I would not have one of these managing wives on any consideration. I would make it a matter of serious enquiry beforehand, whether my mistress's qualifications, if I heard she was notable, were *masculine* or *feminine* ones. If indeed I were an indolent supine mortal, who might be in danger of becoming the property of my steward, I would then perhaps chuse to marry for the qualifications of a steward.

But, setting my mother out of the question, because she *is* my mother, have I not seen how Lady Hartley pranks up herself above all her sex, because she knows how to manage affairs that do not *belong* to her sex to manage?—Affairs that do no credit to her as a woman to understand; *practically*, I mean; for the *theory* of them may not be amiss to be known.

Indeed, my dear, I do not think a *man-woman* a pretty character at all: and, as I said, were I a *man*, I would sooner chuse a dove, though it were fit for nothing, but, as the play says, to go tame about house, and breed, than a wife that is setting at work (my insignificant self *present* perhaps) every busy hour my never resting servants, those of the stud not excepted; and who, with a besom in her hand, as I may say, would be continually filling me with apprehensions, that she wanted to sweep me out of my own house as useless lumber.

Were indeed the mistress of a family (like the wonderful young lady I so *much* and so *justly* admire) to know how to confine herself within her own respectable rounds of the needle, the pen, the housekeeper's bills, the dairy for her amusement; to see the poor fed from superfluities that would otherwise be wasted; and exert herself in all the really useful branches of domestick management; then would she move in her proper sphere; then would she render herself *amiably* useful, and *respectably* necessary; then would she become the *mistress*-wheel of the family; [Whatever you think of your Anna Howe, I would not have her be the *master*-wheel] and every-body would love her; as every-body did you, before your insolent brother came back, flushed with his unmerited acquirements, and turned all things topsy-turvy.

If you *will* be informed of the particulars of our contention, after you have

have known in general, that *your* unhappy affair was the ſubject; why then, I think, I muſt tell you.

Yet how ſhall I?—I feel my cheek glow with mingled ſhame and indignation—Know then, my dear—that I have been—as I may ſay—that I have been *beaten*—Indeed 'tis true. My mother thought fit to ſlap my hands to get from me a ſheet of a letter ſhe caught me writing to you; which I tore, becauſe ſhe ſhould not read it, and burnt it before her face.

I know this will trouble you: ſo ſpare yourſelf the pains to tell me it does.

Mr. Hickman came in preſently after. I would not ſee him. I am either too much a woman to be beat, or too much a child to have an humble ſervant.—So I told my mother. What can one oppoſe but ſullens, when it would be unpardonable ſo much as to *think* of lifting up a finger?

In the Harlowe-ſtyle, ſhe *will* be obeyed, ſhe ſays: and even Mr. Hickman ſhall be forbid the houſe, if he contributes to the carrying on of a correſpondence which ſhe will not ſuffer to be continued.

Poor man! He ſtands a whimſical chance between us. But he knows he is *ſure* of my mother; but not of me. 'Tis eaſy then for him to chuſe his party, were it not his inclination to ſerve you, as it ſurely *is*. And this makes him a merit with me, which otherwiſe he would not have had; notwithſtanding the good qualities which I have juſt now acknowledged in his favour. For, my dear, let my faults in other reſpects be what they may, I will pretend to ſay, that I have in my own mind thoſe qualities which I praiſed him for: and if we are to come together, I could for that reaſon better diſpenſe with them in him.—So if a huſband, who has a bountiful-tempered wife, is not a niggard, nor ſeeks to reſtrain her, but has an opinion of all ſhe does, that is enough for him: as, on the contrary, if a bountiful-tempered huſband has a frugal wife, it is beſt for both. For one to give, and the other to give, except they have prudence, and are at ſo good an underſtanding with each other, as to compare notes, they may perhaps put it out of their power to be *juſt*. Good frugal doctrine, my dear! But this way of putting it, is middling the matter between what I have learnt of my mother's *over*-prudent and your *enlarged* notions.—But from doctrine to fact.

I ſhut myſelf up all that day; and what little I did eat, eat alone. But at night ſhe ſent up Kitty, with a command, upon my obedience, to attend her at ſupper.

I went down: but moſt glorioufly in the ſullens. YES, and NO, were great words with me, to every-thing ſhe aſked, for a good while.

That behaviour, ſhe told me, ſhould not do for her.

Beating ſhould not with me, I ſaid.

My bold reſiſtance, ſhe told me, had provoked her to ſlap my hand: and ſhe was ſorry to have been ſo provoked. But again inſiſted, that I would either give up my correſpondence abſolutely, or let her ſee all that paſſed in it.

I muſt not do either, I told her. It was unſuitable both to my inclination and to my honour, at the inſtigation of baſe minds, to give up a friend in diſtreſs.

She rung all the maternal changes upon the words duty, obedience, filial obligation, and ſo-forth.

I told her, that a duty too rigorouſly and unreaſonably exacted had been your ruin, if you *were* ruined.

If I were of age to be married, I hoped ſhe would think me capable of *making*, or at leaſt of *keeping*, my own friendſhips; ſuch a one eſpecially as this, with a *woman too*, and one whoſe friendſhip ſhe herſelf, till this diſtreſsful point of time, had thought the moſt uſeful and edifying that I had ever contracted.

The greater the merit, the worſe the action: the finer the talents, the more dangerous the example.

There were other duties, I ſaid, beſides the filial one; and I hoped I need not give up a ſuffering friend, eſpecially at the inſtigation of thoſe by whom ſhe ſuffered. I told her, that it was very hard to annex ſuch a condition as that to my duty; when I was perſuaded, that both duties might be performed, without derogating from either: that an unreaſonable command (ſhe muſt excuſe me; I muſt ſay it, though I were ſlapped again) was a degree of tyranny: and I could not have expected, that at theſe years I ſhould be

be allowed no will, no choice of my own! where a woman only was concerned, and the deviliſh ſex not in the queſtion.

What turned moſt in favour of her argument was, that I deſired to be excuſed from letting her read all that paſſes between us. She inſiſted much upon this: and ſince, ſhe ſaid, you were in the hands of the moſt intriguing man in the world; and a man, who had made a jeſt of her favourite Hickman, as ſhe has been told; ſhe knows not what conſequences, unthought of by you or me, may flow from ſuch a correſpondence.

So you ſee, my dear, that I fare the worſe on Mr. Hickman's account! My *mother* might ſee all that paſſes between us, did I not know, that it would cramp your ſpirit, and reſtrain the freedom of your pen, as it would alſo the freedom of mine: and were ſhe not moreover ſo firmly attached to the contrary ſide, that inferences, conſequences, ſtrained deductions, cenſures and conſtructions the moſt partial, would for ever be hawled in to teaze me, and would perpetually ſubject us to the neceſſity of debating and canvaſſing.

Beſides, I don't chuſe that ſhe ſhould know how much this artful wretch has outwitted, as I may call it, a perſon ſo much his ſuperior in all the nobler qualities of the human mind.

The generoſity of your heart, and the greatneſs of your ſoul, full well I know; but do not offer to diſſuade me from this correſpondence.

Mr. Hickman, immediately on the contention above, offered his ſervice; and I accepted of it, as you will ſee by my laſt. He thinks, though he has all honour for my mother, that ſhe is unkind to us both. He was pleaſed to tell me, (with an air, as I thought) that he not only *approved* of our correſpondence, but admired the ſteadineſs of my friendſhip; and having no opinion of your *man*, but a great one of *me*, thinks that my advice or intelligence from time to time may be of uſe to you; and on this preſumption, ſaid, that it would be a thouſand pities that you ſhould ſuffer for want of either.

Mr. Hickman pleaſed me in the main of his ſpeech; and it is well the general tenor of it was agreeable; otherwiſe, I can tell him, I ſhould have reckoned with him for his word *approve*; for it is a ſtile I have not yet permitted him to talk to me in. And you ſee, my dear, what theſe men are —No ſooner do they find that you have favoured them with the power of doing you an agreeable ſervice, but they take upon them to *approve*, forſooth, of your actions! By which is implied a right to *diſapprove*, if they think fit.

I have told my mother, how much you wiſh to be reconciled to your relations, and how independent you are upon Lovelace.

Mark the end of the latter aſſertion, ſhe ſays. And as to reconciliation, ſhe knows that nothing will do (and will have it, that nothing *ought* to do) but your returning back, without preſuming to condition with them. And this if you do, ſhe ſays, will beſt ſhew your independence on Lovelace.

You ſee, my dear, what your duty is, in my mother's opinion.

I ſuppoſe your next directed to Mr. Hickman, at his own houſe, will be from London.

Heaven preſerve you in honour and ſafety, is my prayer.

What you do for change of cloaths, I cannot imagine.

It is amazing to me what your relations can mean by diſtreſſing you as they ſeem reſolved to do. I ſee they will throw you into his arms, whether you will or not.

I ſend this by Robert, for diſpatch-ſake: and can only repeat the hitherto-rejected offer of my beſt ſervices. Adieu, my deareſt friend. Believe me ever *your affectionate and faithful*

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XXXVII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

THURSDAY, APRIL 20.

I Should think myſelf utterly unworthy of your friendſhip, did my own concerns, heavy as they are, ſo engroſs me, that I could not find leiſure for a few lines to declare to my beloved friend my ſincere diſapprobation of her conduct, in an inſtance where ſhe is ſo *generouſly* faulty, that the conſciouſneſs of that very generoſity may hide from her the fault, which I, more than

any other, have reaſon to deplore as being the unhappy occaſion of it.

You know, you ſay, that your account of the contentions between your mother and you will trouble me; and ſo you bid me ſpare myſelf the pains to tell you that they do.

You did not uſe, my dear, to forbid me thus *beforehand*. You were wont to ſay, you loved me the better for my expoſtulations with you on that acknowledged warmth and quickneſs of your temper which your own good ſenſe taught you to be apprehenſive of. What though I have ſo miſerably fallen, and am unhappy? If ever I had any judgment worth regarding, it is now as much worth as ever, becauſe I can give it as freely againſt myſelf as againſt any-body elſe. And ſhall I not, when there ſeems to be an infection in my fault, and that it leads you likewiſe to reſolve to carry on a correſpondence againſt prohibition, expoſtulate with you upon it; when whatever conſequences flow from your diſobedience, they but widen my error, which is as the evil root, from which ſuch ſad branches ſpring?

The mind that can glory in being capable of ſo noble, ſo firm, ſo unſhaken friendſhip, as that of my dear Miſs Howe; a friendſhip which no caſualty or diſtreſs can leſſen, but which encreaſes with the misfortunes of it's friend—Such a mind muſt be above taking amiſs the well-meant admonitions of that diſtinguiſhed friend. I will not therefore apologize for my freedom on this ſubject: and the leſs need I, when that freedom is the reſult of an affection, in the very inſtance, ſo *abſolutely* diſintereſted, that it tends to deprive myſelf of the only comfort left me.

Your acknowledged ſullens; your tearing from your mother's hands the letter ſhe thought ſhe had a right to ſee; and burning it, as you own, before her face; your refuſal to ſee the man, who is ſo willing to obey you for the ſake of your unhappy friend; and this purely to vex your mother; can you think, my dear, upon this brief recapitulation of hardly one half of the faulty particulars you give, that theſe faults are excuſable in one who ſo well knows her duty?

Your mother had a good opinion of me once: is not that a reaſon why ſhe ſhould be more regarded now, when I have, *as ſhe believes*, ſo deſervedly forfeited it? A prejudice in favour is as hard to be totally overcome, as a prejudice in diſfavour. In what a ſtrong light, then, muſt that error appear to her, that ſhould ſo totally turn her heart againſt me, herſelf not a principal in the caſe?

There are other duties, you ſay, beſides the filial duty: but that, my dear, muſt be a duty prior to all other duties; a duty anterior, as I may ſay, to your very birth. And what duty ought not to give way to that, when they come in competition?

You are perſuaded, that the duty to your friend, and the filial duty, may be performed without derogating from either. Your *mother* thinks otherwiſe. What is the concluſion to be drawn from theſe premiſes?

When your mother ſees how much *I* ſuffer in my reputation from the ſtep I have taken, from whom ſhe and all the world expected better things, how much reaſon has ſhe to be watchful over you! One evil draws on another after it; and how knows ſhe, or any-body, where it may ſtop?

Does not the perſon who will vindicate, or ſeek to extenuate, a faulty ſtep in another, [In this light muſt your mother look upon the matter in queſtion between her and you] give an indication either of a culpable will, or a weak judgment; and may not ſhe apprehend, that the cenſorious will think, that ſuch a one might probably have equally failed, under the ſame *inducements* and *provocations*, to *uſe your own words*, as applied to me in a former letter?

Can there be a ſtronger inſtance in human life than mine has ſo early furniſhed within a few months paſt, (not to mention the uncommon provocations to it, which I have met with) of the neceſſity of the continuance of a watchful parent's care over a daughter; let that daughter have obtained ever ſo great a reputation for her prudence?

Is not the ſpace from ſixteen to twenty-one, that which requires this care, more than any time of a young woman's life? For in that period, do we not generally attract the eyes of the other ſex, and become the ſubject of their addreſſes, and not ſeldom of their attempts? And is not that the period in

in which our conduct or misconduct gives us a reputation or disreputation, that almost inseparably accompanies us throughout our whole future lives?

Are we not likewise then most in danger from *ourselves*, because of the distinction with which we are apt to behold particulars of that sex?

And when our dangers multiply, both from *within* and *without*, do not our parents know, that their vigilance ought to be doubled? And shall that necessary increase of care sit uneasy upon us, because we are grown up to stature and womanhood?

Will you tell me, if so, what is the precise stature and age, at which a good child shall conclude herself absolved from the duty she owes to a parent?—And at which a parent, after the example of the dams of the brute creation, is to lay aside all care and tenderness for her offspring?

Is it so hard for you, my dear, to be treated like a child? And can you not think it is hard for a good parent to imagine herself under the unhappy *necessity* of so treating her woman-grown daughter?

Do you think, if your mother had been *you*, and you your *mother*, and *your* daughter had struggled with you, as you did with her, that you would not have been as apt as your mother was to have slapt your daughter's hands, to have made her quit her hold, and give up the prohibited letter?

Your mother told you with great truth, that you *provoked* her to this harshness; and it was a great condescension in her (and not taken notice of by you as it deserved) to say that she was *sorry for it*.

At *every* age on this side matrimony (for then we come under another sort of protection, though that is far from abrogating the filial duty) it will be found, that the wings of our parents are our most necessary and most effectual safeguard from the vultures, the hawks, the kites, and other villainous birds of prey, that hover over us with a view to seize and destroy us the first time we are caught wandering out of the eye or care of our watchful and natural guardians and protectors.

Hard as you may suppose it, to be denied the *continuance* of a correspondence once so much approved, even by the venerable dener; yet, if your mother think my fault to be of such a nature, as that a correspondence with me will cast a shade upon your reputation; all my own friends have given me up—that hardship is to be submitted to. And must it not make her the more strenuous to support her own opinion when she sees the first fruits of this tenaciousness on your side, is to be *gloriously in the sullens*, as you call it; and in a disobedient opposition?

I know that you have an humorous meaning in that expression, and that this turn, in most cases, gives a delightful poignancy both to your conversation and correspondence; but indeed, my dear, *this* case will not bear humour.

Will you give me leave to add to this tedious expostulation, that I by no means approve of some of the things you write, in relation to the manner in which your father and mother lived—at times lived—Only *at times*, I dare say; though perhaps too often.

Your mother is answerable to *anybody*, rather than to her *child*, for whatever was wrong in her conduct, if any-thing *was* wrong, towards Mr. Howe: a gentleman, of whose memory I will only say, that it *ought* to be revered by you—But yet, should you not examine yourself, whether your displeasure at your mother had no part in your revived reverence for your father, at the time you wrote?

No one is perfect: and although your mother may not be so right to remember disagreeableness against the departed, yet should you not want to be reminded on *whose* account, and on *what* occasion, she remembered them. You cannot judge, nor ought you to *attempt* to judge, of what might have passed between both, to embitter and keep awake disagreeable remembrances in the survivor.

LETTER XXXVIII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

IN CONTINUATION.

BUT this subject must not be pursued. Another might, with more pleasure, (though not with more approbation) upon one of your lively excursions. It is upon the high airs you give yourself upon the word *approve*.

How comes it about, I wonder, that a young lady so noted for a predominating generosity, should not be uniformly generous? That your generosity should fail in an instance, where policy, prudence, gratitude, would not permit it to fail? Mr. Hickman (as you confess) has indeed a worthy mind. If I had not long ago known that, he would never have found an advocate in me for my Anna Howe's favour to him. Often and often have I been concerned, when I was your happy guest, to see him, after a conversation in which he had well supported his part in your absence, sink at once into silence the moment you came into company.

I have told you of this before: and I believe I hinted to you once, that the superciliousness you put on *only* to him, was capable of a construction, which at the time would have very little gratified your pride to have had made; since it would have been as much in *his* favour, as in *your* disfavour.

Mr. Hickman, my dear, is a *modest* man. I never see a modest man, but I am sure (if he has not wanted opportunities) that he has a treasure in his mind, which requires nothing but the *key of encouragement* to unlock it, to make him shine—While a confident man, who, to *be* confident, must think as meanly of his company, as highly of himself, enters with magisterial airs upon any subject; and, depending upon his assurance to bring himself off when found out, talks of more than he is master of.

But a *modest* man!—O my dear, shall not a modest woman distinguish and wish to consort with a modest man?—A man, *before* whom, and *to* whom she may open her lips secure of his good opinion of all she says, and of his just and polite regard for her judgment? and who must therefore inspire her with an agreeable self-confidence.

What a lot have I drawn!—We are all indeed apt to turn teachers—But, surely, I am better enabled to talk, to write upon these subjects, than ever I was—But I will banish *myself*, if possible, from an address which, when I began to write, I was determined to confine wholly to your own particular.

My dearest, dearest friend, how ready are you to tell us what *others* should do, and even what a *mother* should have done! But indeed you once, I remember, advanced, that, as different attainments required different talents to master them, so, in the writing way, a person might not be a bad critick upon the works of others, although he might himself be unable to write with excellence. But will you permit me to account for all this readiness of finding fault, by placing it to human nature, which, being sensible of the defects of human nature, (that is to say, of it's *own* defects) loves to be *correcting?* But in exercising that talent, chuses rather to turn it's eye *outward* than *inward?* In other words, to employ itself rather in the *out-door* search, than in the *in-door* examination?

And here give me leave to add (and yet it is with tender reluctance) that although you say very pretty things of notable wives; and although I join with you in opinion, that husbands may have as many inconveniences to encounter *with*, as conveniences to boast *of*, from women of that character; yet Lady Hartley perhaps would have had milder treatment from your pen, had it not been dipt in gall with a mother in your eye.

As to the money you so generously and repeatedly offer, don't be angry with me, if I again say, that I am very desirous that you should be able to aver, without the least qualifying or reserve, that nothing of that sort has passed between us. I know your mother's strong way of putting the *question she is intent upon* having answered. But yet I promise that I will be obliged to nobody but you, when I have occasion.

LETTER XXXIX.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

IN CONTINUATION.

AND now, my dear, a few words, as to the prohibition laid upon you; a subject that I have frequently touched upon, but cursorily, because I was afraid to trust myself with it, knowing that my judgment, if I did, would condemn my practice.

You command me not to attempt to dissuade you from this correspondence; and you tell me how kindly Mr. Hickman approves of it; and how obliging he

he is to me, to permit it to be carried on under cover to him—But this does not quite satisfy me.

I am a very bad casuist; and the pleasure I take in writing to you, who are the only one to whom I can disburden my mind, may make me, as I have hinted, very partial to my own wishes: —else, if it were not an artful evasion beneath an open and frank heart to wish to be complied with, I would be glad methinks to be permitted still to write to you; and only to have such *occasional returns* by Mr. Hickman's pen, as well as cover, as might set me right when I am wrong; confirm me, when right; and guide me where I doubt. This would enable me to proceed in the difficult path before me with more assuredness. For whatever I suffer from the censures of others, if I can preserve your good opinion, I shall not be altogether unhappy, let what will befal me.

And indeed, my dear, I know not how to *forbear* writing. I have now no other employment or diversion. And I must write on, although I were not to send it to any-body. You have often heard me own the advantages I have found from writing down every-thing of moment that befals me; and of all I *think*, and of all I *do*, that may be of future use to me; for, besides that this helps to form one to a style, and opens and expands the ductile mind, every one will find, that many a good thought evaporates in thinking; many a good resolution goes off, driven out of memory perhaps by some other not so good. But when I set down what I *will* do, or what I *have* done, on this or that occasion; the resolution or action is before me either to be adhered to, withdrawn, or amended; and I have entered into *compact* with myself, as I may say; having given it under my own hand to *improve*, rather than to go *backward*, as I live longer.

I would willingly therefore write to *you*, if I *might*; the rather as it would be the more inspiriting to have some end in view in what I write; some friend to please; besides merely seeking to gratify my passion for scribbling.

But why, if your mother will permit our correspondence on communicating to her all that passes in it, and if she would condescend to one only condition, may it not be complied with?

Would she not, do you think, my dear, be prevailed upon to have the communication made to her, *in confidence?*

If there were any prospect of a reconciliation with my friends, I should not have so much regard for my *pride*, as to be afraid of *any-body's* knowing how much I have been *outwitted*, as you call it. I would in *that* case (when I had left Mr. Lovelace) acquaint your mother, and all my own friends, with the whole of my story. It would behove me so to do, for my own reputation, and for their satisfaction.

But if I have no such prospect, what will the communication of my reluctance to go away with Mr. Lovelace, and of his arts to frighten me away, avail me? Your mother has hinted, that my friends would insist upon my returning to them (as a proof of the truth of my plea) to be disposed of, without condition, at their pleasure. If I scrupled this, my brother would rather triumph over me than keep my secret. Mr. Lovelace, whose pride already so ill brooks my regrets for meeting him, (when he thinks, if I had not, I must have been Mr. Solmes's wife) would perhaps treat me with indignity: and thus, deprived of all refuge and protection, I should become the scoff of men of intrigue; and be thought, with too great an appearance of reason, a disgrace to my sex—While that avowed love, *however indiscreetly shewn*, which is followed by marriage, will find more excuses made for it, *than generally it ought to find*.

But if your mother will receive the communication in confidence, pray shew her all that I have written, or shall write. If my past conduct in that case shall not be found to deserve *heavy* blame, I shall then perhaps have the benefit of *her* advice, as well as *yours*. And if after a re-establishment in her favour, I shall wilfully deserve blame for the time to come, I will be content to be denied yours as well as hers for ever.

As to cramping my spirit, as you call it, (were I to sit down to write what I know your mother must see) that, my dear, is already cramped. And do not think so unhandsomely of your mother, as to fear that she would make *partial* constructions against me. Neither you nor I can doubt, but that, had she been left

left unprepoſſeſſedly to herſelf, ſhe would have ſhewn favour to me. And ſo, I dare ſay, would my uncle Antony. Nay, my dear, I can extend my charity ſtill farther: for I am ſometimes of opinion, that were my brother and ſiſter *abſolutely certain*, that they had ſo far ruined me in the opinion of both my uncles, as that they need not be apprehenſive of my claſhing with their intereſts; they would not oppoſe a pardon, although they might not wiſh a reconciliation; eſpecially if I would make a few ſacrifices to them: which, I aſſure you, I ſhould be inclined to make were I wholly free, and independent on this man. You know I never valued myſelf upon worldly acquiſitions, but as they enlarged my power to do things I loved to do. And if I were denied the power, I muſt, as I now do, curb my inclination.

Do not however think me guilty of an affectation in what I have ſaid of my my brother and ſiſter. Severe enough I am ſure it is, in the moſt favourable ſenſe. And an indifferent perſon will be of opinion, that *they* are much better warranted than ever, for the ſake of the family-honour, to ſeek to ruin me in the favour of all my friends.

But to the former topick—Try, my dear, if your mother will, upon the condition above given, permit our correſpondence, on ſeeing all we write. But if ſhe will not, what a ſelfiſhneſs would there be in my love to you, were I to wiſh you to forego your duty for my ſake?

And now, one word, as to the freedom I have treated you with in this tedious expoſtulatory addreſs. I preſume upon your forgiveneſs of it, becauſe few friendſhips are founded on ſuch a baſis as ours:—which is, freely to *give* reproof, and thankfully to *receive* it as occaſions ariſe; that ſo either may have opportunity to clear up miſtakes, to acknowledge and amend errors, as well in behaviour, as in words and deeds; and to rectify and confirm each other in the judgment each ſhall form upon perſons, things, and circumſtances. And all this upon the following conſideration; That it is much more eligible, as well as honourable, to be corrected with the gentleneſs that may be expected from an undoubted friend, than by continuing either blind or wilful, to expoſe ourſelves to the cenſures of an envious, and perhaps malignant world.

But it is as needleſs, I dare ſay, to remind you of this, as it is to *repeat* my requeſt, ſo often repeated, that you will not, in your turn, ſpare the follies and the faults of *your ever affectionate*

CL. HARLOWE.

SUBJOINED TO THE ABOVE.

I SAID, that I would avoid writing any-thing of my own particular affairs in the above addreſs, if I could.

I will write one letter more, to inform you how I ſtand with this man. But, my dear, you muſt permit that one and your anſwer to it, (for I want your advice upon the contents of mine) and the copy of one I have written to my aunt, to be the laſt that ſhall paſs between us, while the prohibition continues.

I fear, I very much fear, that my unhappy ſituation will draw me in to be guilty of evaſion, of little affectations, and of curvings from the plain ſimple truth which I was wont to delight in, and prefer to every other conſideration. But allow me to ſay, and this for *your* ſake, and in order to leſſen your mother's fears of any ill conſequences that ſhe might apprehend from our correſpondence, that if I am at any time guilty of a failure in theſe reſpects, I will not *go on in it*; but endeavour to recover my loſt ground, that I may not bring error into habit.

I have deferred going to town, at Mrs. Sorlings's earneſt requeſt. But have fixed my removal to Monday, as I ſhall acquaint you in my next.

I have already made a progreſs in that next; but, having an unexpected opportunity, will ſend this by itſelf.

LETTER XL.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

FRIDAY, MORN. APRIL 21.

MY mother will not comply with your condition, my dear. I hinted it to her, as from myſelf. But the *Harlowes* (excuſe me) have got her entirely in with them. It is a ſcheme of mine, ſhe told me, formed to draw her into your party againſt your parents.

rents. Which, for your own ſake, ſhe is very careful about.

Don't be ſo much concerned about my mother and me, once more I beg of you. We ſhall do well enough together—Now a falling out, now a falling in.

It uſed to be ſo, when *you* were not in the queſtion.

Yet do I give you my ſincere thanks for every line of your reprehenſive letters; which I intend to read as often as I find my temper riſes.

I will freely own, however, that I winced a little at firſt reading them. But I ſee, that on every re-peruſal, I ſhall love and honour you ſtill more, if poſſible, than before.

Yet I think, I have one advantage over you; and which I will hold through this letter, and through all my future letters; that is, that I will treat you as freely as you treat me; and yet will never think an *apology neceſſary to you for my freedom.*

But that you ſo think with reſpect to me, is the effect of your gentleneſs of temper, with a little ſketch of implied reflection on the warmth of mine. Gentleneſs in a woman you hold to be no fault: nor do I, a little due or provoked warmth—But what is this, but praiſing on both ſides, what neither of us can help; nor perhaps *wiſh* to help? You can no more go out of your road, than I can go out of mine. It would be a pain to either to do ſo:—what then is it in either's approving of her own natural bias, but making a virtue of neceſſity?

But one obſervation I will add, that were *your* character, and *my* character, to be truly drawn, mine would be allowed to be the moſt natural. Shades and lights are equally neceſſary in a fine picture. Yours would be ſurrounded with ſuch a flood of brightneſs, with ſuch a glory, that it would indeed dazzle; but leave one heartleſs to imitate it.

O may you not ſuffer from a baſe world for your gentleneſs; while my temper, by it's warmth, keeping all impoſition at diſtance, though leſs amiable in general, affords me not reaſon, as I have mentioned heretofore, to wiſh to make an exchange with you!

I ſhould indeed be inexcuſable to open my lips by way of contradiction to my mother, had I ſuch a fine ſpirit as yours to deal with. Truth is truth, my dear! Why ſhould narrowneſs run away with the praiſes due to a noble expanſion of heart? If every-body would ſpeak out, as I do, (that is to ſay, give praiſe where only praiſe is due; diſpraiſe where due likewiſe) *ſhame*, if not *principle*, would mend the world—Nay, ſhame would *introduce* principle in a generation or two. Very true, my dear: do you apply. I dare not.—For I *fear* you almoſt as much as I *love* you.

I will give you an inſtance, nevertheleſs, which will a-new demonſtrate, that none but very generous and noble-minded people ought to be implicitly obeyed. You know what I ſaid above, that *truth* is *truth*.

Inconveniences will ſometimes ariſe from having to do with perſons of modeſty and ſcrupuloufneſs. Mr. Hickman, you ſay, is a *modeſt* man. He put your corrective packet into my hand with a very fine bow, and a ſelf-ſatisfied air; [*we'll conſider what you ſay of this honeſt man by-and-by, my dear*] his ſtrut was not gone off, when in came my mother, as I was reading it.

When ſome folks find their anger has made them conſiderable, they will be always angry, or ſeeking occaſions for anger.

'Why, now, Mr. Hickman—Why, 'now, Nancy,' [as I was huddling in the packet between my gown and my ſtays, at her entrance.] 'You have a 'letter brought you this inſtant.'—While the *modeſt* man, with his pauſing brayings, 'Mad-da—Mad-dam,' looked as if he knew not whether he had beſt to run, and leave me and my mother to fight it out, or to ſtand his ground and ſee fair-play.

It would have been poor to tell a lye for it. She flung away. I went out at the oppoſite door, to read the contents; leaving Mr. Hickman to exerciſe his *white teeth* upon his thumb-nails.

When I had read your letters, I went to find out my mother. I told her the generous contents, and that you deſired that the prohibition might be adhered to. I propoſed your condition, as for myſelf; and was rejected, as above.

She ſuppoſed, ſhe was finely painted between two young creatures, who had more wit than prudence: and inſtead of being prevailed upon by the generoſity of

of your ſentiments, made uſe of your opinion only to confirm her own, and renewed her prohibitions, charging me to return no other anſwer, but that ſhe *did* renew them: adding, that they ſhould ſtand, till your relations were reconciled to you; hinting as if ſhe had *engaged for as much*; and expected my compliance.

I thought of your reprehenſions, and was *meek*; though not pleaſed. And let me tell you my dear, that as long as I can ſatisfy my own mind, that good is intended, and that it is hardly poſſible that evil ſhould enſue from our correſpondence—As long as I know, that this prohibition proceeds originally from the ſame ſpiteful minds which have been the occaſion of all theſe miſchiefs—As long as I know, that it is not your fault if your relations are not reconciled to you; and that upon conditions which no reaſonable people would refuſe—You muſt give me leave, with all deference to your judgment, and to your excellent leſſons, (*which would reach almoſt every caſe of this kind but the preſent*) to inſiſt upon your writing to me, and that minutely, as if this prohibition had not been laid.

It is not from humour, from perverſeneſs, that I inſiſt upon this. I cannot expreſs how much my heart is in your concerns. And you muſt, in ſhort, allow me to think, that if I can do you ſervice by writing, I ſhall be better juſtified in *continuing* to write, than my mother is in her prohibition.

But yet, to ſatisfy you all I can, I will as ſeldom return anſwers, while the interdict laſts, as may be conſiſtent with my notions of friendſhip, and with the ſervice I owe you, and can do you.

As to your expedient of writing by Hickman, [and now, my dear, your *modeſt man* comes in: and as you love modeſty in that ſex, I will do my endeavour, by holding him at a proper diſtance, to keep him in your favour] I know what you mean by it, my ſweet friend. It is to make that man ſignificant with me. As to the correſpondence, THAT *ſhall* go on, I do aſſure you, be as ſcrupulous as you pleaſe—So that *that* will not ſuffer if I do *not* cloſe with your propoſal as to him.

I muſt tell you, that I think it will be honour enough for him to have his name made uſe of ſo frequently betwixt us. This, of itſelf, is placing a confidence in him, that will make him walk bolt upright, and diſplay his *white hand*, and his *fine diamond ring*; and moſt mightily lay down his ſervices, *and* his pride to oblige, *and* his diligence, *and* his fidelity, *and* his contrivances to keep our ſecret, *and* his excuſes, *and* his evaſions to my mother, when challenged by her; with fifty *and's* beſide: and will it not moreover give him pretence and excuſe oftener than ever to pag-nag it hither to good Mrs. Howe's fair daughter?

But to admit him into my company tête-à-tête, and into my cloſet, as often as I would wiſh to write to you; I only to dictate to his pen—my mother all the time ſuppoſing that I was going to be heartily in love with him—To make him maſter of my ſentiments, and of my *heart*, as I may ſay, when I write to you—Indeed, my dear, I *won't*. Nor, were I married to the beſt HE in England, would I honour him with the communication of my correſpondences.

No, my dear, it is ſufficient ſurely, for him to parade it in the character of our letter-conveyer, and to be honoured in a cover. And never fear but, modeſt as you think him, he will make enough of that.

You are always blaming me for want of generoſity to this man, and for abuſe of power. But I profeſs, my dear, I cannot tell how to help it. Do, dear now, let me ſpread my plumes a little, and now-and-then make myſelf feared. This is my time, you know, ſince it would be no more to *my* credit, than to *his*, to give myſelf thoſe airs when I am married. He has a joy when I am pleaſed with him that he would not know, but for the pain my diſpleaſure gives him.

Men, no more than *women*, know how to make a moderate uſe of power. Is not that ſeen every day from the prince to the peaſant? If I do not make Hickman quake now-and-then, he will endeavour to make me fear. All the animals in the creation are more or leſs in a ſtate of hoſtility with each other. The wolf, that runs away from a lion, will devour a lamb the next moment. I remember, that I was once ſo enraged at a game-chicken that was continually pecking at another, (a poor humble one, as I thought him) that I had the offender caught, and without more ado, in a *pet of humanity*, wrung his

his neck off. What followed this execution? Why that other grew insolent, as soon as *his* insulter was gone, and was continually pecking at one or two under *him*. 'Peck and be hanged,' said I—'I might as well have pre-'served the first; for I see it is the *na-'ture of the beast*.'

Excuse my flippancies. I wish I were with you. I would make you smile in the midst of your gravest airs, as I used to do. O that you had accepted of my offer to attend you! But *nothing that I offer*, will you accept—Take care!—You will make me very angry with you: and when I am, you know I value nobody: for, dearly as I love you, I must be, and cannot always help it, *your saucy*

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XLI.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

FRIDAY, APRIL 21.

MR. Lovelace communicated to me this morning early, from his intelligencer, the news of my brother's scheme. I like him the better for making very light of it; and for his treating it with contempt. And indeed, had I not had the hint of it from you, I should have suspected it to be some contrivance of his, in order to hasten me to town, where he has long wished to be himself.

He read me the passage in that Leman's letter, which is pretty much to the effect of what you wrote to me from Miss Lloyd; with this addition, that one Singleton, a master of a Scots vessel, is the man, who is to be the principal in this act of violence.

I have seen him. He has been twice entertained at Harlowe Place, as my brother's friend. He has the air of a very bold and fearless man; and I fancy it must be *his* project; as my brother, I suppose, talks to every-body of the rash step I have taken; for he did not spare me before he had this seeming reason to censure me.

This Singleton lives at Leith; so, perhaps, I am to be carried to my brother's house not far from that port.

Putting these passages together, I am not a little apprehensive, that the design, lightly as Mr. Lovelace, from his fearless temper, treats it, may be attempted to be carried into execution; and of the consequences that may attend it, if it be.

I asked Mr. Lovelace, seeing him so frank and cool, what he would advise me to do?

'Shall I ask *you*, Madam, what are 'your own thoughts?—Why I return 'the question,' said he, 'is, because 'you have been so very earnest that I 'should leave you as soon as you are 'in London, that I know not what to 'propose, without offending you.'

'My opinion is,' said I, 'that I 'should studiously conceal myself from 'the knowledge of every-body but 'Miss Howe; and that you should 'leave me out of hand; since they will 'certainly conclude, that where *one* is, 'the *other* is not far off: and it is easier 'to trace *you* than *me*.'

'You would not surely wish,' said he, 'to fall into your brother's hands 'by such a violent measure as this? 'I propose not to throw myself officiously in their way; but should 'they have reason to think I avoided 'them, would not that whet their diligence to find you, and their courage 'to attempt to carry you off; and subject me to insults that no man of spirit can bear?'

'Lord bless me!' said I, 'to what 'has this one fatal step that I have been 'betrayed into——'

'Dearest Madam, let me beseech you 'to forbear this harsh language, when 'you see, by this new scheme, how determined they were upon carrying 'their old ones, had you not been *betrayed*, as you call it. Have I offered 'to defy the laws of society, as this 'brother of yours must do, if anything be intended by this project? I 'hope you will be pleased to observe, 'that there are as violent and as wicked 'enterprizers as myself—But this is so 'very wild a project, that I think there 'can be no room for apprehensions 'from it. I know your brother well. 'When at college, he had always a romantick turn: but never had a head 'for any-thing but to puzzle and confound himself. A half invention, and 'a whole conceit; but not master of talents to do himself good, or others 'harm, but as those others gave him 'the power by their own folly.'

'This is very volubly run off, Sir!—'But violent ſpirits are but too much 'alike; at leaſt in their methods of re'ſenting. You will not preſume to 'make yourſelf a leſs innocent man 'ſurely, who had determined to brave 'my whole family in perſon, if my 'folly had not ſaved *you* the raſhneſs, 'and *them* the inſult.'

'Dear Madam!—Still muſt it be '*folly, raſhneſs!*—It is as impoſſible for 'you to think tolerably of any-body 'out of your own family, as it is for 'any-one *in it* to *deſerve* your love! 'Forgive me, deareſt creature! If I did 'not love you as never man loved a 'woman, I might appear more indiffe'rent to preferences ſo undeſervedly 'made. But let me aſk you, Madam, 'What have you borne from *me?*—'What cauſe have I given you to treat 'me with ſo much ſeverity, and ſo lit'tle confidence?—And what have you 'not borne from *them?* Malice and 'ill-will, indeed, ſitting in judgment 'upon my character, may not give ſen'tence in my favour: but what *of your* 'own *knowledge* have you againſt me?'

Spirited queſtions, were they not, my dear?—And they were aſked with as ſpirited an air. I was ſtartled. But I was reſolved not to deſert myſelf.

'Is this a *time*, Mr. Lovelace, is this 'a *proper* occaſion taken, to give your'ſelf theſe high airs to me, a young 'creature deſtitute of protection? It is 'a ſurprizing queſtion you aſk me. 'Had I aught againſt you *of my own* 'knowledge?—I can tell you, Sir ——'

And away I would have flung.

He ſnatched my hand, and beſought me not to leave him in diſpleaſure. He pleaded his paſſion for me, and my ſeverity to him, and partiality for thoſe from whom I had ſuffered ſo much; and whoſe intended violence, he ſaid, was now the ſubject of our deliberation.

I was forced to hear him.

'You condeſcended, deareſt crea'ture,' ſaid he, 'to aſk my advice. It 'is very eaſy, give me leave to ſay, to 'adviſe you what to do. I hope I may 'on this *new* occaſion, ſpeak without 'offence, *notwithſtanding your former* 'injunctions—You ſee that there can 'be no hope of reconciliation with your 'relations. Can you, Madam, conſent to honour with your hand, a 'wretch whom you have never yet 'obliged with one *voluntary* favour!'

What a *recriminating*, what a *reproachful way*, my dear, was this, of putting a queſtion of this nature!

I expected not from him, at the time, and juſt as I was very angry with him, either the queſtion or the manner. I am aſhamed to recollect the confuſion I was thrown into; all your advice in my head at the moment: yet his words ſo prohibitory. He confidently ſeemed to enjoy my confuſion, [*Indeed, my dear, he knows not what reſpectful love is!*] and gazed upon me, as if he would have looked me through.

He was ſtill more declarative afterwards indeed, as I ſhall mention by-and-by: but it was half extorted from him.

My heart ſtruggled violently between reſentment and ſhame, to be thus teazed by one who ſeemed to have all *his* paſſions at command, at a time when I had very little over *mine!* till at laſt I burſt into tears, and was going from him in high diſguſt: when throwing his arms about me, with an air, however, the moſt tenderly reſpectful, he gave a *ſtupid* turn to the ſubject.

It was far from his heart, he ſaid, to take ſo much *advantage* of the *ſtreight*, which the diſcovery of my brother's fooliſh project had brought me into, as to renew, *without my permiſſion*, a propoſal which I had hitherto diſcountenanced; and which for *that* reaſon—

And then he came with his *half-ſentences*, apologizing for what he had not ſo much as *half-propoſed*.

Surely, he had not the inſolence to *intend* to teaze me, to ſee if I could be brought to ſpeak what became me not to ſpeak—But, whether he had or not, it *did* teaze me; inſomuch that my very heart was fretted, and I broke out at laſt into freſh tears, and a declaration, that I was very unhappy. And juſt then recollecting how like a tame fool I ſtood with his arms about me, I flung from him with indignation. But he ſeized my hand, as I was going out of the room, and upon his knees beſought my ſtay for one moment: and then, in words the moſt clear and explicit, tendered himſelf to my acceptance, as the moſt effectual means to diſappoint my brother's ſcheme, and ſet all right.

But what could I ſay to this?—Extorted from him, as it ſeemed to me, rather as the effect of his compaſſion, than his love? What *could* I ſay? I

paſued,

pauſed, I looked ſilly—I am *ſure* I looked very ſilly. He ſuffered me to pauſe, and look ſilly; *waiting for* me *to ſay ſomething*: and at laſt (aſhamed of my confuſion, and aiming to make an *excuſe for it*) I told him that I deſired he would avoid ſuch meaſures as might add to the uneaſineſs, which it muſt be viſible to him I had, when he reflected upon the irreconcileableneſs of my friends, and upon what might follow from this unaccountable project of my brother.

He promiſed to be governed by me in every-thing. And again the wretch, inſtead of preſſing his former queſtion, aſked me, *if I forgave him for the humble ſuit he had made to me?* What had I to do, but to try for a palliation of my confuſion, ſince it ſerved me not?

I told him I had hopes it would not be long before Mr. Morden arrived; and doubted not, that that gentleman would be the readier to engage in my favour, when he found that I made no other uſe of *his* (Mr. Lovelace's) aſſiſtance, than to free myſelf from the addreſſes of a man ſo diſagreeable to me as Mr. Solmes: I muſt therefore wiſh, that every-thing might remain as it was, till I could hear from my couſin.

This, although teazed by him as I was, was not, you ſee, my dear, a *denial*. But he muſt throw himſelf into a heat, rather than try to perſuade; which any other man, in his ſituation, I ſhould think would have done: and this warmth obliged me to adhere to my ſeeming negative.

This was what he ſaid, with a vehemence that muſt harden any woman's mind, who had a ſpirit above being frighted into paſſiveneſs.

'Good God! And will you, Madam, ſtill reſolve to ſhew me, that I 'am to hope for no ſhare in your fa'vour, while any the remoteſt proſpect 'remains, that you will be received by 'my bittereſt enemies, at the price of 'my utter rejection?'

This was what I returned, with warmth, and with a ſalving art *too*—'You have ſeen, Mr. Lovelace, how 'much my brother's violence can af'fect me: but you will be miſtaken, if 'you let looſe yours upon me, with a 'thought of terrifying me into meaſures 'the contrary of which you have ac'quieſced with.'

He only beſought me to ſuffer his *future actions* to ſpeak for him; and, if I ſaw him worthy of any favour, that I would not let him be the *only* perſon within my knowledge who was not entitled to my conſideration.

'You refer to a *future time*, Mr. Love'lace, ſo do I, for the *future proof* of 'a merit you ſeem to think for the *paſt* 'time wanting: and *juſtly* you think 'ſo.' And I was again going from him.

One word more he begged me to hear—He was determined ſtudiouſly to avoid all miſchief, and every ſtep that might lead to miſchief, let my brother's proceedings, ſhort of a violence upon my perſon, be what they would: but if any attempt that ſhould extend to that, were to be made, would I have him to be a quiet ſpectator of my being ſeized, or carried back, or on board, by this Singleton; or, in any caſe of extremity, was he not permitted to ſtand up in my defence?

'*Stand up in my defence*, Mr. Love'lace!—I ſhould be very miſerable, 'were there to be a call for that. But 'do you think I might not be *ſafe* and '*private* in London? By your friend's 'deſcription of the widow's houſe, I 'ſhould think I might be ſafe there.'

The widow's houſe, he replied, as deſcribed by his friend, being a *back-houſe within a front-one*, and *looking to a garden, rather than to a ſtreet*, had the *appearance* of privacy: but if, when there, it was not approved, it would be eaſy to find another more to my liking—Though, as to his part, the method he would adviſe ſhould be, to write to my uncle Harlowe as one of my truſtees, and wait the iſſue of it here at Mrs. Sorlings's, fearleſsly directing it to be anſwered *hither*. To be afraid of little ſpirits, was but to encourage inſults, he ſaid. The ſubſtance of the letter ſhould be, To demand as a right, what they would refuſe if requeſted as a courteſy: to acknowledge that I had put myſelf [too well, he ſaid, did their treatment juſtify me] into the protection of the *ladies* of his family, [by whoſe orders, and Lord M.'s, he himſelf would appear to act:] but that upon my own terms; which were ſuch, that I was under no obligation to thoſe ladies for the favour; it being no more than they would have granted to any one of my ſex, equally diſtreſſed. If I approved not of this method, happy

should he think himself, he said, if I would honour him with the opportunity of making such a claim in his *own* name—But this was a point [with his *buts* again in the same breath!] that *he durst but just touch upon*. He hoped, however, that I would think their violence a sufficient inducement for me to take such a wished-for resolution.

Inwardly vexed, I told him, That he himself had proposed to leave me when I was in town: that I expected he would: and that, when I was known to be absolutely independent, I should consider what to write, and what to do; but that, while he was with me, I neither would nor could.

He would be very sincere with me, he said: this project of my brother's had changed the face of things. He must, before he left me, see whether I should or should not approve of the London widow, and her family, if I chose to go thither. They might be people whom my brother might buy. But if he saw they were persons of integrity, he then might go for a day or two, or so. But he must needs say, he could not leave me longer at a time.

'Do you propose, Sir,' said I, 'to 'take up your lodgings in the house 'where I shall lodge?'

He did *not*, he said; as he knew the use I intended to make of his absence, and my punctilio—And yet the house where he had lodgings was new-fronting, and not in condition to receive him: but he could go to his friend Belford's, in Soho; or perhaps he might reach to the same gentleman's house at Edgware, over-night, and return on the mornings, till he had reason to think this wild project of my brother's laid aside. But to no greater distance till then should he care to venture.

The result of all was, to set out on Monday next for town. I hope it will be in a happy hour.

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER XLII.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

FRIDAY, APRIL 21.

AS it was not probable, that the lady could give so particular an account of her own confusion, in the affecting scene she mentions on Mr. Lovelace's offering himself to her acceptance; the following extracts are made from his letter of the above date.

AND now, Belford, what wilt thou say, if like the fly buzzing about the bright taper, I had like to have singed the silken wings of my liberty? Never was man in greater danger of being caught in his own snares: all my views anticipated; all my schemes untried; the admirable creature not brought to town; nor one effort made to know if she be really angel or woman.

I offered myself to her acceptance, with a suddenness, 'tis true, that gave her no time to wrap herself in reserves; and in terms *less tender* than *fervent*, tending to upbraid her for her past indifference, and to remind her of her injunctions: for it was the fear of her brother, not her love of me, that had inclined her to dispense with those injunctions.

I never beheld so sweet a confusion. What a glory to the pencil, could it do justice to it, and to the mingled impatience which visibly informed every feature of the most meaning and most beautiful face in the world! She hemmed twice or thrice: her look, now so charmingly silly, then so sweetly significant; till at last the lovely teazer, teazed by my hesitating expectation of her answer, out of all power of articulate speech, burst into tears, and was turning from me with precipitation, when, presuming to fold her in my happy arms—'O think not, best beloved of 'my heart,' said I, 'think not, that 'this motion, which you may believe 'to be so contrary to your *former injunctions*, proceeds from a design to 'avail myself of the cruelty of your relations: if I have *disobliged* you by 'it, (and you know with what *respectful tenderness* I have presumed to hint 'it) it shall be my utmost care for the 'future——' There I stopt.

Then she spoke; but with vexation—'I am—I am—*very* unhappy!'—Tears trickling down her crimson cheeks; and her sweet face, as my arms still encircled the finest waist in the world, sinking upon my shoulder; the dear creature so absent that she knew not the honour she permitted me.

'But why, but why unhappy, my 'dearest life?' said I—'All the gra-'titude that ever overflowed the heart 'of the most obliged of men—'

Justice

Juſtice to myſelf there ſtopped my mouth: for what *gratitude* did I owe her for obligations ſo involuntary?

Then recovering herſelf, and her uſual reſerves, and ſtruggling to free herſelf from my claſping arms, 'How 'now, Sir!' ſaid ſhe, with a cheek more indignantly glowing, and eyes of a fiercer luſtre.

I gave way to her angry ſtruggle; but, abſolutely overcome by ſo charming a diſplay of innocent confuſion, I caught hold of her hand as ſhe was flying from me; and kneeling at her feet, 'O my angel!' ſaid I, (quite deſtitute of reſerve, and hardly knowing the tenor of my own ſpeech; and had a parſon been there, I had certainly been a gone man) 'receive the vows of your 'faithful Lovelace. Make him yours, 'and only yours, for ever. This will 'anſwer every end. Who will dare to 'form plots and ſtratagems againſt my 'wife? That you are not ſo, is the 'ground of all their fooliſh attempts, 'and of their inſolent hopes in Solmes's 'favour.—O be mine!—I beſeech you '(thus on my knee I *beſeech* you) to 'be mine. We ſhall then have all the 'world with us. And every-body will 'applaud an event that every-body ex-'pects.'

Was the devil in me! I no more intended all this extatick nonſenſe, than I thought the ſame moment of flying in the air! All power is with this charming creature. It is I, not ſhe, at this rate, that muſt fail in the arduous trial.

Didſt thou ever before hear of a man uttering ſolemn things by an involuntary impulſe, in defiance of premeditation, and of all his proud ſchemes? But this ſweet creature is able to make a man forego every purpoſe of his heart that is not favourable to her. And I verily think I ſhould be inclined to ſpare her all further trial, [And yet what trial has ſhe had?] were it not for the contention that her vigilance has ſet on foot, *which* ſhall overcome the *other*. Thou knoweſt my generoſity to my uncontending Roſebud—And ſometimes do I qualify my ardent aſpirations after even this very fine creature, by this reflection—That the moſt charming woman on earth, were ſhe an empreſs, can excel the meaneſt, in the cuſtomary viſibles only—Such is the equality of the diſpenſation, to the prince and the peaſant, in this prime gift, WOMAN.

Well, but what was the reſult of this involuntary impulſe on my part?—Wouldſt thou not think, I was taken at my offer?—An offer ſo ſolemnly made, and on one knee too?

No ſuch thing!—The pretty trifler let me off as eaſily as I could have wiſhed.

Her brother's project; and to find, that there were no hopes of a reconciliation for her; and the apprehenſion ſhe had of the miſchiefs that might enſue—Theſe, not *my offer*, nor *love of me*, were the cauſes to which ſhe aſcribed all her ſweet confuſion—An *aſcription* that is high treaſon againſt my ſovereign pride—To make marriage with *me*, but a ſecond-place refuge; and as good as to tell me, that her confuſion was owing to her concern that there were no hopes that my enemies would accept of her intended offer to renounce a man who had ventured his life for her, and was ſtill ready to run the ſame riſque in her behalf!

I re-urged her to make me happy—But I was to be poſtponed to her couſin Morden's arrival. On him are now placed all her hopes.

I raved; but to no purpoſe.

Another letter was to be ſent, or had been ſent, to her aunt Hervey; to which ſhe hoped an anſwer.

Yet ſometimes I think, that fainter and fainter would have been her procraſtinations, had I been a man of courage—*But ſo fearful was I of offending!*

A confounded thing! The man to be ſo baſhful; the woman to want ſo much courting!—How ſhall two ſuch come together; no kind mediatreſs in the way?

But I muſt be contented. It is ſeldom, however, that a love *ſo ardent* as mine meets with a ſpirit *ſo reſigned* in the *ſame perſon*. But true love, I am now convicted, only wiſhes: nor has it any active will but that of the adored object.

But, O the charming creature, again of herſelf to mention London! Had Singleton's plot been of *my own contriving*, a more happy expedient could not have been thought of to induce her to reſume her purpoſe of going thither; nor can I divine what could be her reaſon for poſtponing it.

I incloſe the letter from Joſeph Leman,

man, which I mentioned to thee in mine of Monday laſt *, with my anſwer to it. I cannot reſiſt the vanity that urges me to the communication. Otherwiſe, it were better, perhaps, that I ſuffer thee to imagine, that this lady's ſtars fight againſt her, and diſpenſe the opportunities in my favour which are only the conſequences of my own ſuperlative invention.

LETTER XLIII.

TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ. HIS HONNER.

SAT. APRIL 15.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONNER,

THIS is to let your honner kno', as how I have been emploied in a biſneſs I would have been excuſed from, if ſo be I could, for it is to gitt evidenſe from a young man, who has of late com'd out to be my cuzzen by my grandmother's ſide; and but lately come to live in theſe partes, about a very vile thing, as younge maſter calls it, relating to your honner. God forbid I ſhould call it ſo without your leaſe. It is not for ſo plane a man as I be, to tacks my betters. It is conſarning one Miſs Batirton, of Notingam; a very pritty crature, belike.

Your honner got her away, it ſeems, by a falſe letter to her, macking believe as howe her ſhe-cuzzen that ſhe derely loved, was coming to ſee her; and was tacken ill upon the rode: and ſo Miſs Batirton ſet out in a ſhaſe, and one ſarvant, to fet her cuzzen from the inne where ſhe laid ſick, as ſhe thote: and the ſarvant was tricked, and braute back the ſhaſe; but Miſs Batirton was not harde of for a month, or ſo. And when it came to paſſe, that her frends founde her oute, and would have proſſekutid your honner, your honner was gone abroad: and ſo ſhe was broute to-bed, as one may ſay, before your honner's return: and ſhe got colde in her lyin-inn, and lanquitched, and ſoon died: and the child is living; but your honner never troubles your honner's hedd about it in the leaſt. And this and ſome ſuch other matters of verry bad reporte, Squier Solmes was to tell my young lady of, if ſo be ſhe would have harde him ſpeke, before we loſt her ſweet company, as I may ſay, from heere †.

I hope your honner will excuſe me. But I was forſed to tell all I harde, becauſe they had my cuzzen in to them, and he would have ſaid he had tolde me: ſo could not be melely-mouthed, for fere to be blone up, and pleſe your honner.

Your honner helped me to many ugly ſtories to tell againſt your honner to my younge maſter, and younge miſtriſs; but did not tell me about this.

I moſt humbelly beſeche your honner to be good and kinde and fethful to my deareſt younge lady, now you have her; or I ſhall brake my harte for having done ſome dedes that have helped to bring things to this paſſe. Pray youre dere good honner, be juſt! Prayey do!—As God ſhall love ye! prayey do!—I cannot write no more for this preſſent, for verry fear and grief.

But now I cumm'd to my writing agen, will your honner be pleaſed to tell me, if as how there be any danger to your honner's life from this biſneſs; for my cuzzen is actlie hier'd to go down to Miſs Batirton's frendes, to ſee if they will ſtir in it: for you muſt kno' your honner, as how he lived in the Batirton family at the time, and could be a good evidenſe, and all that.

I hope it was not ſo verry bad, as Titus ſays it was; for he ſes as how there was a rape in the caſe betwixt you *at furſte*, and pleſe your honner; and my cuzzen Titus is a very honiſt younge man as ever brocke bred. This is his carackter; and this made me willinger to owne him for my relation, when we came to talck.

If there ſhould be danger of your honner's life, I hope your honner will not be hanged like as one of us common men; only have your hedd cut off, or ſo: and yet it is pity ſuch a hedd ſhould be loſſed: but if as how it ſhoulde be proſſekutid to that furr, which God forbid, be pleſed, natheleſs, to thinck of youre fethful Joſeph Leman, before your hedd be condemned; for after condemnation, as I have been told, all will be the king's or the ſhreeve's.

I thote as how it was beſt to acquent your honner of this; and for you to let me kno' if I could do any-thing to ſarve your honner, and prevent miſchief

* See Page 372. † See Vol. II. Page 185.

with

with my cuzzen Titus, on his coming back from Nottingam, before he mackes his reporte.

I have gin him a hint already: 'For 'what,' as I sed to him, 'cuzzen Titus, 'signifies ſtirring up the coles, and 'macking of ſtrife, to make rich gen-'tilfolkes live at varience, and to be 'cutting of throtes, and ſuch-like?'

'Very trewe,' ſed little Titus. And this and pleſe your honner gis me hopes of him, if ſo be your honner gis me direction; ſen', as God kno'es, I have a poor, a verry poor invenſhun; only a willing mind to prevent miſchief, that is the chief of my aim, and always was, I bleſs my God!—Els I could have made much miſchief in my time; as indeed any ſarvant may. Your honner, natheleſs, praiſes my invenſhon every now-and-then; alas! and pleſe your honner, what invenſhon ſhould ſuche a plane man as I have?—But when your honner ſets me agoing by *your* fine invenſhon, I can do well enuff. And I am ſure I have a hearty good-will to deſerve your honner's faver, if I mought.

Two days, as I may ſay, off and on, have I been writing this long letter. And yet I have not ſed all I would ſay. For, be it knone unto your honner, as how I do not like that Capten Singelton, which I told you of *in my two laſt letters*. He is always laying his hedd and my young maſter's hedd together; and I ſuſpect much if ſo be ſome miſchief is not going on between them: and ſtill the more, as becauſe my eldeſt young lady ſemes to be joined to them ſometimes.

Laſt week my young maſter ſed before my faſe, '*My harte's blood boiles 'over, Capten Singelton, for revenge 'upon this*——' And he called your honner by a name it is not for ſuch a won as me to ſay what. Capten Singelton whiſpred my younge maſter, being I was by. So younge maſter ſed, '*You 'may ſay any-thing before Joſeph; for 'althoff he looks ſo ſeellie, he has as good 'a harte, and as good a hedd, as any 'ſarvant in the worlde nede to have.*' My conſcience touched me juſt then. But why ſhouldè it? when all I do is to prevente miſcheff; and ſeing your honner has ſo much patience, which younge maſter has not; ſo am not affeard of telling your honner any-thing whatſomever.

And furthermore, I have ſuché a deſire to deſarve your honner's bounty to me, as mackes me let nothing paſs I can tell you of, to prevent harm: and too-beſides your honner's goodneſs about the Blew Bore; which I have ſo good an accounte of!—I am ſure I ſhall be bounden to bleſs your honner the longeſt day I have to live.

And then the Blew Bore is not all neither; ſen', and pleſe your honner, the pretty Sowe (God forgive me for geſting in ſo ſerus a matter) runs in my hedd likewiſe. I believe I ſhall love her maymap more than your honner would have me; for ſhe begins to be kind and good-humered, and liſtens, and pleſe your honner, licke as *if ſhe was among beans*, when I talke about the Blew Bore, and all that.

Prayey your honner forgive the geſting of a poor plane man. We common fokes have our joys, and pleſe your honner, lick as our betters have; and if we be ſometimes ſnubbed, we can find our underlings to ſnub them agen; and if not, we can get a wife mayhap, and ſnub her: ſo are maſters ſome how or other ourſells.

But how I try your honner's patience!—Sarvants will ſhew their joyful hartes, tho' off but in partinens, when encouredg'd.

Be pleſed from the prems's to let me kno' if as how I can be put upon any ſarvice to ſarve your honner, and to ſarve my deereſt younge lady; which God grant! For I begin to be affeard for her, hearing what peple talck—To be ſure your honner will not do her no *harme*, as a man may ſay. But I kno' your honner muſt be good to ſo wonderous a younge lady. How can you help it?—But heere my conſcience ſmites me, that *but for ſome of my ſtories, which your honner taute me, my old maſter and my old lady, and the two old ſquires, would not have been able to be half ſo hard-harted as they be, for all what my young maſter and young miſtreſs ſayes.*

And here is the ſad thing; they cannot come to clere up matters with my deereſt young lady, becauſe, as *your honner has ordered it*, they have theſe ſtories as if bribed by me out of your honner's ſarvant; which muſt not be known for fere you ſhould kill'n and me too, and blacken the briber!—Ah! your honner!—I doute as that I am a very vild fellow,

fellow, (Lord bleſs my ſoul, I pray God) and did not intend it.

But if my deereſt young lady ſhould come to harm and pleſe your honner, the horſepond at the Blew Bore—But Lord preſerve us all from all bad miſcheff, and all bad endes, I pray the Lord!—For tho'ff your honner is kinde to me in worldly pelff, yet *what ſhall a man get to loos his ſoul*, as Holy Skrittner ſays, and pleſe your honner?

But, natheleſs, I am in hope of reppentence hereafter, being but a younge man, if I do wrong thro' ignorens; your honner being a great man, and a grate wit; and I a poor crature, not worthy notice; and your honner able to anſwer for all. But, howſomever, I am *your honner's fethful ſarvant in all dewtie*,

JOSEPH LEMAN.

APRIL 15 AND 16.

LETTER XLIV.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOSEPH LEMAN.

MONDAY, APRIL 17.

HONEST JOSEPH,

YOU have a worſe opinion of your invention than you ought to have. I muſt praiſe it again. Of a plain man's head, I have not known many better than yours. How often have your foreſaſt and diſcretion anſwered my wiſhes in caſes which I could not foreſee, not knowing how my general directions would ſucceed, or what might happen in the execution of them! You are too doubtful of your own abilities, honeſt Joſeph; that's your fault. But it being a fault that is owing to natural *modeſty*, you ought rather to be *pitied* for it than *blamed*.

The affair of Miſs Betterton was a youthful frolick. I love dearly to exerciſe my invention. I do aſſure you, Joſeph, that I have ever had more pleaſure in my contrivances, than in the end of them. I am no ſenſual man; but a man of ſpirit—One woman is like another—*You underſtand me, Joſeph*——In courſing all the ſport is made by the winding hare. A barn-door chick is better eating. *Now you take me, Joſeph.*

Miſs Betterton was but a tradeſman's daughter. The family, indeed, were grown rich, and aimed at a new line of gentry; and were unreaſonable enough to expect a man of my family would marry her. I was honeſt. I gave the young lady no hope of that; for ſhe put it to me. She reſented: kept up, and was kept up. A little innocent contrivance was neceſſary to get her out—But no rape in the caſe, I aſſure you, Joſeph—She loved me: I loved her. Indeed, when I got her to the inn, I aſked her no queſtions. It is cruel to aſk a modeſt woman for her conſent. It is creating difficulties to both. Had not her friends been officious, I had been conſtant and faithful to her to this day, as far as I know—For then I had not known my angel.

I went not abroad upon *her* account. She loved me too well, to have appeared againſt me. She refuſed to ſign a paper they had drawn up for her, to found a proſecution upon: and the brutal creatures would not permit the midwife's aſſiſtance, till her life was in danger; and I believe to this her death was owing.

I went into mourning for her, though abroad at the time. A diſtinction I have ever paid to thoſe worthy creatures who died in childbed by me.

I was ever nice in my loves. Theſe were the rules I laid down to myſelf on my entrance into active life: To ſet the mother above want, if her friends were cruel, and if I could not get her a huſband worthy of her: to ſhun common women; a piece of juſtice I owed to innocent ladies, as well as to myſelf: to marry off a former miſtreſs, if poſſible, before I took to a new one: to maintain a lady handſomely in her lying-in: to provide for the little one, if it lived, according to the degree of it's mother: to go into mourning for the mother, if ſhe died. And the promiſe of this was a great comfort to the pretty dears, as they grew near their times.

All my errors, all my expences, have been writ: and upon women. So I could acquit my conſcience, (acting thus honourably by them) as well as my diſcretion, as to point of fortune.

All men love women: and find me a man of more honour in theſe points, if you can, Joſeph.

No wonder the ſex love me as they do!

But *now* I am ſtrictly virtuous. I am reformed. So I have been for a long, long time: reſolving to marry, as ſoon as I can prevail upon the moſt admi-

rable

rable of women to have me. I think of nobody elſe: it is impoſſible I ſhould. I have ſpared very pretty girls for her ſake. Very true, Joſeph! So ſet your honeſt heart at reſt—You ſee the pains I take to ſatisfy your qualms.

But as to Miſs Betterton—No rape in the caſe I repeat. Rapes are unnatural things: and more *are* than are imagined, Joſeph.—I ſhould be loth to be put to ſuch a ſtreight. I never was. Miſs Betterton was taken from me againſt her own will. In that caſe, her friends, not I, committed the rape.

I have contrived to ſee the boy twice, unknown to the aunt, who takes care of him; loves him; and would not now part with him, on any conſideration. The boy is a fine boy, I thank God. No father need be aſhamed of him. He will be well provided for. If not, I would take care of him. He will have his mother's fortune. They curſe the father, ungrateful wretches! but bleſs the boy—Upon the whole, there is nothing vile in this matter on my ſide; a great deal on the Bettertons.

Wherefore, Joſeph, be not thou in pain, either for *my* head, or for *thy* own neck; nor for the Blue Boar; nor for the pretty Sow.

I love your jeſting. Jeſting better becomes a poor man, than qualms.—I love to have you jeſt. All we ſay, all we do, all we wiſh for, is a jeſt. He that makes life itſelf not ſo, is a ſad fellow, and has the worſt of it.

I doubt not, Joſeph, but you have had your joys, as you ſay, as well as your betters. May you have more and more, honeſt Joſeph!—He that grudges a poor man joy, ought to have none himſelf. Jeſt on, therefore: jeſting, I repeat, better becomes thee than qualms.

I had no *need* to tell you of Miſs Betterton: did I not furniſh you with ſtories enough without hers, againſt myſelf, to augment your credit with your cunning maſters? Beſides, I was loth to mention Miſs Betterton, her friends being all living, and in credit. I loved her too; for ſhe was taken from me by her cruel friends while our joys were young.

But enough of dear Miſs Betterton. *Dear*, I ſay; for death *endears*.—Reſt to her worthy ſoul!—There, Joſeph, off went a deep ſigh to the memory of Miſs Betterton!

As to the journey of little Titus, [I now recollect the fellow by his name] let that take it's courſe: a lady dying in child-bed eighteen months ago; no proceſs begun in her life-time; refuſing herſelf to give evidence againſt me while ſhe lived—Pretty circumſtances to found an indictment for a rape upon!

As to your young lady, the ever-admirable Miſs Clariſſa Harlowe, I always courted her for a wife. Others rather expected marriage from the vanity of their own hearts, than from my promiſes. For I was always careful of what I promiſed. You know, Joſeph, that I have gone beyond my promiſes to *you*. I do to every-body: and why? Becauſe it is the beſt way of ſhewing, that I have no grudging or narrow ſpirit. A promiſe is an obligation. *A juſt man will keep his promiſe. A generous man will go beyond it.* This is my rule.

If you doubt my honour to your young lady, it is more than ſhe does. She would not ſtay with me an hour if ſhe did. Mine is the ſteadieſt heart in the world. Haſt thou not reaſon to think it ſo?—Why this ſqueamiſhneſs then, honeſt Joſeph?

But it is becauſe thou *art* honeſt: ſo I forgive thee. Whoever loves my divine Clariſſa, loves me.

Let James Harlowe call me what names he will. For his ſiſter's ſake I will bear them. Do not be concerned for me. Her favour will make me rich amends. His own vilely malicious heart will make his blood *boil over* at any time: and when it does, thinkeſt thou that I will let it touch my conſcience?—And if not *mine*, why ſhould it touch *thine?* Ah! Joſeph, Joſeph! what a fooliſh teazer is thy conſcience!—Such a conſcience, as gives a plain man trouble, when he intends to do for the beſt, is weakneſs, not conſcience.

But ſay what thou wilt, write all thou knoweſt or heareſt of, to me: I'll have patience with every-body. Why ſhould I not, when it is as much the deſire of my heart, as it is of thine, to prevent miſchief?

So now, Joſeph, having taken all this pains to ſatisfy thy conſcience, and anſwer all thy doubts, and to baniſh all thy fears; let me come to a *new point*.

Your endeavours and mine, which were deſigned, *by round-about ways*, to reconcile all, even againſt the wills

of the moſt obſtinate, have not, we ſee, anſwered the end we hoped they would anſwer; but, on the contrary, have widened the unhappy differences between our families. But this has not been either your fault or mine: it is owing to the black pitch-like blood of your venomous-hearted young maſter, *boiling over*, as he owns, that our honeſt wiſhes have hitherto been fruſtrated.

Yet we muſt proceed in the ſame courſe: we ſhall tire them out in time, and they will propoſe terms; and when they do, they ſhall find how reaſonable mine ſhall be, little as they deſerve from me.

Perſevere therefore, Joſeph; honeſt Joſeph, perſevere; and, unlikely as you may imagine the means, our deſires will be at laſt obtained.

We have nothing for it now, but to go through with our work in the way we have begun. For ſince (as I told you in my laſt) my beloved miſtruſts you, ſhe will blow you up, if ſhe be *not* mine. If ſhe *be*, I can and will protect you; and as, if there will be any fault, in her opinion, it will be rather mine than yours, ſhe *muſt* forgive you, and keep her huſband's ſecrets, for the ſake of his reputation: elſe ſhe will be guilty of a great failure in her duty. So, now you have ſet your hand to the plough, Joſeph, there is no looking back.

And what is the conſequence of all this? One labour more, and that will be all that will fall to your lot; at leaſt, of conſequence.

My beloved is reſolved not to think of marriage till ſhe has tried to move her friends to a reconciliation with her. You know they are determined not to be reconciled. She has it in her head, I doubt not, to make me ſubmit to the people I hate; and if I did, they would rather inſult me, than receive my condeſcenſion as they ought. She even owns, that ſhe will renounce me, if they inſiſt upon it, provided they will give up Solmes! So, to all appearance, I am ſtill as far as ever from the happineſs of calling her mine: indeed I am more likely than ever to loſe her; (if I cannot contrive ſome way to avail myſelf of the preſent critical ſituation) and then, Joſeph, all I have been ſtudying, and all you have been doing, will ſignify nothing.

At the place where we are, we cannot long be private. The lodgings are inconvenient for us, while both together, and while ſhe refuſes to marry. She wants to get me at a diſtance from her. There are extraordinary convenient lodgings in my eye in London, where we could be private, and all miſchief avoided. When *there*, (if I *get* her thither) ſhe will inſiſt, that I ſhall leave her. Miſs Howe is for ever putting her upon contrivances. That, you know, is the reaſon I have been obliged, by your means, to play the family off at Harlowe Place upon Mrs. Howe, and Mrs. Howe upon her daughter—Ah! Joſeph!—Little need for your fears for my angel: *I* only am in danger—But were I the free liver I am reported to be, all this could I get over with a wet finger, as the ſaying is.

But, by the help of one of your hints, I have thought of an expedient which will do every-thing; and raiſe your reputation, though already ſo high, higher ſtill. This Singleton, I hear, is a fellow who loves enterprizing: the view he has to get James Harlowe to be his principal owner in a larger veſſel which he wants to be put into the command of, may be the ſubject of their preſent cloſe converſation. But ſince he is taught to have ſo good an opinion of you, Joſeph, cannot you (ſtill pretending an abhorrence of me, and of my contrivances) propoſe to Singleton to propoſe to James Harlowe (who ſo much thirſts for revenge upon me) to aſſiſt him with his whole ſhip's crew, upon occaſion, to carry off his ſiſter to Leith, where both have houſes, or elſewhere?

You may tell them, that if this can be effected, it will make me raving mad; and bring your young lady into all their meaſures.

You can inform them, *as from my ſervant*, of the diſtance ſhe keeps me at, in hopes of procuring her father's forgiveneſs, by cruelly giving me up, if inſiſted upon.

You can tell them, that as the only ſecret my ſervant has kept from you, is, the place we are in, you make no doubt, that a two-guinea bribe will bring that out, and alſo an information when I ſhall be at a diſtance from her, that the enterprize may be conducted with ſafety.

You may tell them, (ſtill as from my ſervant) that we are about removing

ing from inconvenient lodgings to others more convenient; (which is true) and that I must be often absent from her.

If they listen to your proposal, you will promote your interest with Betty, by telling it to her as a secret. Betty will tell Arabella of it. Arabella will be overjoyed at any-thing that will help forward her revenge upon me; and will reveal it (if her brother do not) to her uncle Antony. He probably will whisper it to Mrs. Howe. She can keep nothing from her daughter, though they are always jangling. Her daughter will acquaint my beloved with it. And if it will not, or if it will, come to my ears from some of those, you can write it to me, as in confidence, by way of preventing mischief; which is the study of us both.

I can then shew it to my beloved. Then will she be for placing a greater confidence in me. That will convince me of her love, which now I am sometimes ready to doubt. She will be for hastening to the safer lodgings. I shall have a pretence to stay about her person, as a guard. She will be convinced, that there is no expectation to be had of a reconciliation. You can give James Harlowe and Singleton continual false scents, as I shall direct you; so that no mischief can possibly happen.

And what will be the happy, happy, thrice happy consequence?—The lady will be mine in an honourable way. We shall all be friends in good time. The two guineas will be an agreeable addition *to the many gratuities I have helped you to by the like contrivances from this stingy family*. Your reputation, both for head and heart, as I hinted before, will be heightened. The Blue Boar will also be yours. Nor shall you have the least difficulty about raising money to buy the stock, if it be worth your while to have it.

Betty will likewise then be yours. You have both saved money, it seems. The whole Harlowe family, whom you have so faithfully served, ['Tis serving them, surely, to prevent the mischief which their violent son would have brought upon them] will throw you in somewhat towards housekeeping. I will still add to your store. So nothing but happiness before you!

Crow, Joseph, crow! A dunghill of thy own in view: servants to snub at thy pleasure. A wife to quarrel with, or to love as thy humour leads thee: *landlord* and *landlady* at every word. To be paid, instead of paying, for thy eating and drinking. But not thus happy only in thyself; happy in promoting peace and reconciliation between two good families, in the long run; without hurting any Christian soul. O Joseph, honest Joseph! what envy wilt thou raise!—And who would be squeamish with such prospects before him!

This one labour, I repeat, crowns the work. If you can get but such a design entertained by them, whether they prosecute it or not, it will be equally to the purpose of *your loving friend*,

R. LOVELACE.

LETTER XLV.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MRS. HERVEY.

[INCLOSED IN HER LAST TO MISS HOWE.]

THURSDAY, APRIL 20.

HONOURED MADAM,

HAVING not had the favour of an answer to a letter I took the liberty to write to you on the 14th, I am in some hopes that it may have miscarried; for I had much rather it should, than to have the mortification to think that my aunt Hervey deemed me unworthy of the honour of her notice.

In this hope, having kept a copy of it, and not being able to express myself in terms better suited to the unhappy circumstances of things, I transcribe and inclose what I then wrote*. And I humbly beseech you to favour the contents of it with your interest.

Hitherto it is in my power to perform what I undertake for in this letter; and it would be very grievous to me to be precipitated upon measures, which may render the desirable reconciliation more difficult.

If, Madam, I were permitted to

* The contents of the Letter referred to are given Page 349.

write to you with the hopes of being anſwered, I could clear my intention with regard to the ſtep I have taken, although I could not perhaps acquit myſelf to ſome of my ſevereſt judges, of an imprudence previous to it. You, I am ſure, would pity me, if you knew all I could ſay, and how miſerable I am in the forfeiture of the good opinion of all my friends.

I flatter myſelf, that *their* favour is yet retrievable. But whatever be the determination at Harlowe Place, do not *you*, my deareſt aunt, deny me the favour of a few lines, to inform me if there can be any hope of a reconciliation upon terms leſs ſhocking than thoſe heretofore endeavoured to be impoſed upon me; or if (which God forbid!) I am to be for ever reprobated.

At leaſt, my dear aunt, procure for me the juſtice of my wearing-apparel, and the little money and other things which I wrote to my ſiſter for, and mention in the incloſed to you; that I may not be deſtitute of common conveniences, or be under a neceſſity to owe an obligation for ſuch, where (at preſent, however) I would leaſt of all owe it.

Allow me to ſay, that had I *deſigned* what happened, I might (as to the money and jewels at leaſt) have ſaved myſelf ſome of the mortifications which I have ſuffered, and which I ſtill further apprehend, if my requeſt be not complied with.

If you are permitted to encourage an eclairciſſement of what I hint, I will open my whole heart to you, and inform you of every-thing.

If it be any pleaſure to have me mortified, be pleaſed to let it be known, that I am extremely mortified: and yet it is *entirely* from my own reflections that I am ſo; having nothing to find fault with, in the behaviour of the perſon from whom every evil was apprehended.

The bearer having buſineſs your way, will bring me your anſwer on Saturday morning, if you favour me according to my hopes. I knew not that I ſhould have this opportunity till I had written the above.

I am, my deareſt aunt, *your ever-dutiful*

CL. HARLOWE.

Be pleaſed to direct for me, if I am to be favoured with a few lines, 'To be left at Mr. Oſgood's, near 'Soho Square;' and nobody ſhall ever know of your goodneſs to me, if you deſire it to be kept a ſecret.

LETTER XLVI.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

SATURDAY, APRIL 22.

I Cannot for my life account for your wretch's teazing ways. But he certainly doubts your love of him. In this *he* is a *modeſt* man, as well as *ſomebody* elſe; and tacitly confeſſes, that he does not deſerve it.

Your Iſraelitiſh hankerings after the Egyptian onion; (teſtified ſtill more in your letter to your aunt) your often-repeated regrets for meeting him; for being betrayed away by him—Theſe he cannot bear.

I have been looking back on the whole of his conduct, and comparing it with his general character; and find that he is more *conſiſtently*, more *uniformly*, mean, revengeful, and proud; than either of us once imagined.

From his cradle, as I may ſay, as an *only child*, and a *boy*, humourſome, ſpoiled, miſchievous; the governor of his governors.

A libertine in his riper years, hardly regardful of appearances; and deſpiſing the ſex in general, for the faults of particulars of it, who made themſelves too cheap to him.

What has been his behaviour in your family, a CLARISSA in view, (from the time your fooliſh brother was obliged to take a life from him) but defiance for defiances?—Getting you into his power by terror, by artifice. What politeneſs can be expected from ſuch a man?

Well, but what in ſuch a ſituation is to be done? Why, you muſt deſpiſe him: you muſt hate him—if you can—and run away from him—But whither? Whither indeed, now that your brother is laying fooliſh plots to put you in a ſtill worſe condition, as it may happen?

But if you cannot deſpiſe and hate him; if you care not to break with him; you muſt part with ſome punctilios, and if the ſo doing bring not on the

the solemnity, you must put yourself into the protection of the ladies of his family.

Their respect for you is of itself a security for his honour to you, if there could be any room for doubt. And at least you should remind him of his offer to bring one of the Miss Montagues to attend you at your new lodgings in town, and accompany you till all is happily over.

This, you'll say, will be as good as *declaring* yourself to be his. *And so let it.* You ought not now to think of any-thing else but to be *his*. Does not your brother's project convince you more and more of this?

Give over then, my dearest friend, any thoughts of this hopeless reconciliation, *which has kept you balancing thus long*. You own, in the letter before me, that he made very explicit offers, though you give me not the very words. And he gave his reasons, I perceive, with his wishes, that you should accept them: which very few of the sorry fellows do; whose plea is generally but a compliment to our self-love—*That we must love them*, however presumptuous and unworthy, *because they love us*.

Were I in *your place*, and had *your* charming delicacies, I should, perhaps, do as you do. No doubt but I should expect that the man should urge me with respectful warmth; that he should supplicate with constancy, and that all his words and actions should tend to the one principal point—Nevertheless, if I suspected art or delay, founded upon his doubts of my love, I would either condescend to clear up his doubts or renounce him for ever.

And in this last case, I, your Anna Howe, would exert myself, and either find you a private refuge, or resolve to share fortunes with you.

What a wretch, to be so easily answered by your reference to the arrival of your cousin Morden! But I am afraid that you was too scrupulous:—for did he not resent that reference?

Could we have *his* account of the matter, I fancy, my dear, I should think you over-nice, over-delicate*. Had you laid hold of his *acknowledged* explicitness, he would have been as much in *your* power, as now you seem to be in *his*—You wanted not to be told, that the person who had been tricked into such a step as you had taken, must of necessity submit to many mortifications.

But were it to *me*, a girl of spirit as I am thought to be, I do assure you, I would in a quarter of an hour (all the time I would allow to punctilio in such a case as yours) know what he drives at: since either he must mean *well* or *ill*. If *ill*, the sooner you know it, the better. If *well*, whose modesty is it he distresses, but that of his own wife?

And methinks you should endeavour to avoid all exasperating recriminations, as to what you have heard of his failure in morals; especially while you are so happy, as not to have occasion to speak of them by experience.

I grant, that it gives a worthy mind some satisfaction in having borne it's testimony against the immoralities of a bad one. But that correction which is unseasonably given, is more likely either to harden or make an hypocrite, than to reclaim.

I am pleased, however, as well as you, with his making light of your brother's *wise* project.—Poor creature! and must Master Jemmy Harlowe, with his half-wit, pretend to plot, and contrive mischief, yet rail at Lovelace for the same things?—A witty villain deserves hanging at once: (and without ceremony if you please) but a half-witted one deserves broken bones first, and hanging afterwards. I think Lovelace has given his character in few words †.

Be angry at me, if you please; but as sure as you are alive, now that this poor creature, whom some call your brother, finds he has succeeded in making you fly your father's house, and that he has nothing to fear but your getting into your *own*, and into an independence of him, he thinks himself equal to any-thing, and so has a mind to fight Lovelace with his own weapons.

Don't you remember his pragmati-

* The reader who has seen his account, which Miss Howe could not have seen, when she wrote thus, will observe, that it was not possible for a person of her true delicacy of mind to act otherwise than she did, to a man so cruelly and so insolently artful.

† See Page 391.

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cal triumph, as told you by your aunt, and prided in by that saucy Betty Barnes, from his own foolish mouth*?

I expect nothing from your letter to your aunt. I hope Lovelace will never know the contents of it. In every-one of yours, I see that he as warmly resents as he dares, the little confidence you have in him. I should resent it too, were I he; and knew I deserved better.

Don't be scrupulous about cloaths, if you think of putting yourself into the protection of the ladies of his family. They know how matters stand between you and your relations, and love you never the worse for the silly peoples cruelty.

I know you won't demand possession of your estate. But give *him* a right to demand it for you; and that will be still better.

Adieu, my dear! May Heaven guide and direct you in all your steps, is the daily prayer of *your ever-affectionate and faithful*

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XLVII.

MR. BELFORD, TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

FRIDAY, APRIL 21.

THOU, Lovelace, hast been long the *entertainer*; I the *entertained*. Nor have I been solicitous to animadvert, as thou wentest along, upon thy inventions, and their tendency. For I believed, that with all thy airs, the unequalled perfections and fine qualities of this lady would always be her protection and security. But now, that I find, thou hast so far succeeded, as to induce her to come to town, and to chuse her lodgings in a house, the people of which will too probably damp and suppress any honourable motions which may arise in thy mind in her favour, I cannot help writing: and that professedly in her behalf.

My inducements to this are not owing to virtue: but if they *were*, what hope could I have of affecting thee, by pleas arising from it?

Nor would such a man as thou art be deterred; were I to remind thee of the vengeance which thou mayest one day expect, if thou insultest a woman of her character, family, and fortune.

Neither are gratitude and honour motives to be mentioned in a woman's favour, to men, such as we are, who consider all those of the sex as fair prize, over whom we can obtain a power. For *our honour*, and *honour* in the *general acceptation* of the word, are two things.

What then is my motive?—What, but the true friendship that I bear thee, Lovelace; which makes me plead *thy own sake*, and *thy family's sake*, in the justice thou owest to this incomparable creature; who, however so well deserves to have *her sake* to be mentioned as the principal consideration.

Last time I was at M. Hall, thy noble uncle so earnestly pressed me to use my interest to persuade thee to enter the pale, and gave me so many family reasons for it that I could not help engaging myself heartily on his side of the question; and the rather as I knew, that thy own intentions with regard to this fine woman were then worthy of *her*. And of this I assured his lordship; who was half-afraid of thee, because of the ill usage thou receivedst from her family. But now, that the case is altered, let me press the matter home to thee from other considerations.

By what I have heard of this lady's perfections from every mouth, as well as from thine, and from every letter thou hast written, where wilt thou find such another woman? And why shouldst thou tempt her virtue?—Why shouldst thou wish to try where there is no reason to doubt!

Were I in thy case, and designed to marry, and if I preferred a woman as I know thou dost this, to all the women in the world, I should dread to make further trial, knowing what *we* know of the sex, for *fear* of succeeding; and especially if I doubted not, that if there were a woman in the world virtuous at heart, it is she.

And let me tell thee, Lovelace, that in this lady's situation, the trial is not a fair trial. Considering the depths of thy plots and contrivances; considering the opportunities which I see thou must have with her, in spite of her own heart; all her relations follies acting in concert, though unknown to

* See Vol. II. Page 282, 284.

themselves,

themſelves, with thy wicked ſcheming head; conſidering how deſtitute of protection ſhe is; conſidering the houſe ſhe is to be in, where ſhe will be ſurrounded with thy implements; *ſpecious*, *well-bred*, and *genteel* creatures, not eaſily to be detected when they are diſpoſed to preſerve appearances, eſpecially by the young, unexperienced lady wholly unacquainted with the town; conſidering all theſe things, I ſay, what glory, what cauſe of triumph, wilt thou have, if ſhe ſhould be overcome?—Thou, too, a man born for intrigue, full of invention, intrepid, remorſeleſs, able patiently to watch for thy opportunity, not hurried, as moſt men, by guſts of violent paſſion, which often nip a project in the bud, and make the ſnail that was juſt putting out his horns to meet the inviter, withdraw into it's ſhell—A man who has no regard to his word or oath to the ſex; the lady ſcrupulouſly ſtrict to *her* word, incapable of art or deſign; apt therefore to believe well of others—It would be a miracle if ſhe ſtood ſuch an attempter, ſuch attempts, and ſuch ſnares, as I ſee will be laid for her. And after all, I ſee not when men are ſo frail *without* importunity, that ſo much ſhould be expected from women, daughters of the ſame fathers and mothers, and made up of the ſame brittle compounds, (education all the difference) nor where the triumph is in ſubduing them.

'May there not be other Lovelaces,' thou aſkeſt, 'who, attracted by her 'beauty, may endeavour to prevail 'with her*?'

No; there cannot, I anſwer, be ſuch another man, perſon, mind, fortune, and thy character, as above given, taken in. If thou imagineſt there could, ſuch is thy pride, that thou wouldſt think the worſe of thyſelf.

But let me touch upon thy predominant paſſion, *revenge*; for *love* is but ſecond to that, as I have often told thee, though it has ſet thee into raving at me: what poor pretences for revenge are the difficulties thou hadſt in getting her off; allowing that ſhe had run a riſque of being Solmes's wife, had ſhe ſtaid? If theſe are other than pretences, why thankeſt thou not thoſe who, by their perſecutions of her, anſwered thy hopes and threw her into thy power? —Beſides, are not the pretences thou makeſt for further trial, moſt ungratefully, as well as *contradictorily*, founded upon the ſuppoſition of error in her, occaſioned by her *favour* to thee?

And let me, for the utter confuſion of thy poor pleas of this nature, aſk thee—Would ſhe, in thy opinion, had ſhe *willingly gone off with thee*, have been entitled to *better* quarter?—For a *miſtreſs* indeed ſhe might: but wouldſt thou for a *wife* have had cauſe to like her half ſo well, as now?

Has ſhe not demonſtrated, that even the higheſt provocations were not ſufficient to warp her from her duty to her parents, though a *native*, and, as I may ſay, an originally *involuntary* duty, becauſe *native?* And is not this a charming earneſt that ſhe will ſacredly obſerve ſtill a higher duty into which ſhe propoſes to enter, when ſhe does enter, by *plighted* vows, and entirely as a *volunteer?*

That ſhe loves thee, wicked as thou art, and cruel as a panther, there is no reaſon to doubt. Yet, what a command has ſhe over herſelf, that ſuch a penetrating ſelf-flatterer as thyſelf, is ſometimes ready to doubt it! Though perſecuted on the one hand, as ſhe was, by her own family, and attracted on the other, by the ſplendor of thine; every one of whom courts her to rank herſelf among them?

Thou wilt perhaps think, that I have departed from my propoſition, and pleaded the *lady's ſake* more than *thine* in the above—But no ſuch thing. All that I have written, is more in *thy* behalf than in *hers*; ſince ſhe may make *thee* happy; but it is next to impoſſible, I ſhould think, if ſhe preſerve her delicacy, that thou canſt make *her* ſo. What is the love of a rakiſh heart? There cannot be *peculiarity* in it. But I need not give my further reaſons. Thou wilt have ingenuouſneſs enough, I dare ſay, were there occaſion for it, to ſubſcribe to my opinion.

I plead not for the ſtate from any great liking to it myſelf. Nor have I, at preſent, thoughts of entering into it. But as thou art the laſt of thy name; as thy family is of note and figure in thy country; and as thou thyſelf thinkeſt that thou ſhalt one day marry:

* See Page 334.

is it poſſible, let me aſk thee, that thou canſt have ſuch another opportunity as thou now haſt, if thou letteſt this ſlip? A woman, in her family and fortune not unworthy of thine own; (though thou art ſo apt, from pride of anceſtry, and pride of heart, to ſpeak ſlightly of the families thou diſlikeſt) ſo celebrated for beauty; and ſo noted at the ſame time for prudence, for *ſoul*, (I will ſay, inſtead of *ſenſe*) and for virtue?

If thou art not ſo narrow-minded an elf, as to prefer thine own *ſingle* ſatisfaction to *poſterity*, thou, who ſhouldſt wiſh to beget children for duration, wilt not poſtpone till the rake's uſual time; that is to ſay, till diſeaſes or years, or perhaps both, lay hold of thee; ſince in that caſe thou wouldſt entitle thyſelf to the curſes of thy legitimate progeny for giving them a being altogether miſerable: a being, which they will be obliged to hold upon a worſe tenure than that *tenant-courteſy*, which thou calleſt the *worſt**; to wit, upon the *doctor's courteſy*; thy deſcendants alſo propagating (if they ſhall live, and be able to propagate) a wretched race, that ſhall entail the curſe, or the *reaſon* for it, upon remote generations.

Wicked as the ſober world accounts you and me, we have not yet, it is to be hoped, got over all compunction. Although we find religion againſt us, we have not yet preſumed to make a religion to ſuit our practices. We deſpiſe thoſe who do. And we know better than to be even *doubters*. In ſhort, we believe a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments. But as we have ſo much youth and health in hand, we hope to have time for repentance. That is to ſay, in plain Engliſh, [nor think thou me too grave, Lovelace: *thou* art grave ſometimes, though not often] we hope to live to ſenſe, as long as ſenſe can reliſh, and purpoſe to reform when we can ſin no longer.

And ſhall this admirable woman ſuffer for her generous endeavours to ſet on foot thy reformation; and for inſiſting upon proofs of the ſincerity of thy profeſſions before ſhe will be thine?

Upon the whole matter, let me wiſh thee to conſider well what thou art about, before thou goeſt a ſtep farther in the path which thou haſt chalked out for thyſelf to tread, and art juſt going to enter upon. Hitherto all is ſo far right, that if the lady *miſtruſts* thy honour, ſhe has no *proofs*. Be honeſt to her, then, in *her* ſenſe of the word. None of thy companions, thou knoweſt, will offer to laugh at what *thou* doſt. And if they *ſhould*, (on thy entering into a ſtate which has been ſo much ridiculed by thee, and by all of us) thou haſt one advantage—It is this; that thou canſt not be aſhamed.

Deferring to the poſt-day to cloſe my letter, I find one left at my couſin Ogood's, with direction to be forwarded to the lady. It was brought within theſe two hours by a *particular* hand, and has a Harlowe-ſeal upon it. As it may therefore be of importance, I diſpatch it with my own, by my ſervant, poſt-haſte *.

I ſuppoſe you will ſoon be in town. Without the lady, I hope. Farewel. *Be honeſt, and be happy.*

J. BELFORD.

SAT. APR. 22.

LETTER XLVIII.

MRS. HERVEY, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

[IN ANSWER TO LETTER XIV.]

DEAR NIECE,

IT would be hard not to write a few lines, ſo much preſſed to write to one I ever loved. Your former letter I received; yet was not at liberty to anſwer it. I break my word to anſwer you now.

Strange informations are every day received about you. The wretch you are with, we are told, is every hour triumphing and defying—Muſt not theſe informations aggravate? You know the uncontroulableneſs of the man. He loves his own humour better than he loves you—though ſo fine a creature as you are! I warned you over and over: no young lady was ever more warned!—Miſs Clariſſa Harlowe to do ſuch a thing!

You might have given your friends the meeting. If you had *held* your averſion, it would have been complied

* See Page 351.

† This letter was from Miſs Arabella Harlowe. See Letter LI.

with,

with. As soon as I was entrusted myself with their *intention* to give up the point, I gave you a hint—a dark one perhaps*—But who would have thought—O Miss!—Such an *artful* flight!—Such *cunning* preparation?

But you want to clear up things—*What* can you clear up? Are you not gone off?—With a Lovelace too? *What*, my dear, would you clear up?

You did not *design* to go, you say. Why did you meet him then, chariot-and-six, horsemen, all prepared by him? O, my dear, how art produces art!—Will it be believed?—If it *would*, what power will he be thought to have had over you!—He—Who?—*Lovelace!*—The vilest of libertines!—Over whom?—A *Clarissa!*—Was your love for such a man above your reason? Above your resolution?—What credit would a belief of this, *if* believed, bring you?—How mend the matter?—Oh! that you had stood the next meeting!

I'll tell you all that was intended if you had.

It was indeed, imagined, that you would not have been able to resist your father's entreaties and commands. He was resolved to be all condescension, if anew you had not provoked him. '*I love my Clary Harlowe*,' said he, but an hour before the killing tidings were brought him; '*I love her as my life: I will kneel to her, if nothing else will do, to prevail upon her to oblige me.*'

Your father and mother (the reverse of what should have been!) would have humbled themselves to *you*: and if you *could* have denied them, and refused to sign the settlements previous to the meeting, they would have yielded, although with regret.

But it was presumed, so naturally sweet your temper, so self-denying, as they thought you, that you could *not* have withstood them, notwithstanding all your dislike of the *one* man, without a greater degree of head-strong passion for the *other*, than you had given any of us reason to expect from you.

If you *had*, the meeting on Wednesday would have been a lighter trial to you. You would have been presented to all your assembled friends, with a short speech only, That this was the young creature, till very lately faultless, condescending, and obliging; now having cause to glory in a triumph over the wills of father, mother, uncles, the most indulgent; over family-interests, family-views; and preferring her own will to every body's; and this for a transitory preference to *person* only; there being no comparison between the men as to their *morals*.

Thus complied with, and perhaps blessed, by your father and mother, and the consequences of your disobedience deprecated in the solemnest manner by your inimitable mother, your *generosity* would have been appealed to, since your duty would have been found too weak an inducement, and you would have been bid to withdraw for one half-hour's consideration: then would the settlements have been again tendered for your signing, by the person least disobliging to you; by your good Norton perhaps; the perhaps seconded by your father again: and if again refused, you would again have been led in, to declare such your refusal. Some restrictions which you yourself had proposed, would have been insisted upon. You would have been permitted to go home with me, or with your uncle Antony, (with *which* of us was not agreed upon, because they hoped you might be persuaded) there to stay till the arrival of your cousin Morden; or till your father could have borne to see you; or till assured, that the views of Lovelace were at an end.

This the intention, your father so set upon your compliance, so much in hopes that you would have yielded, that you would have been prevailed upon by methods so condescending and so gentle; no wonder that *he*, in particular, was like a distracted man, when he heard of your flight—of your flight, so *premeditated*;—with your Ivy Summer House dinings, your arts to blind me, and all of us!—naughty, naughty young creature!

I, for my part, would not believe it, when told of it. Your uncle Hervey would not believe it. We rather expected, we rather feared, a still more desperate adventure. There could be but one more desperate; and I was readier to have the cascade first resorted to, than the garden back-door.—Your mother fainted away, while her heart

* See Vol. II. Page 283.

was torn between the two apprehensions.—Your father, poor man! your father was beside himself for near an hour — What imprecations! — What dreadful imprecations!—To this day he can hardly bear your name: yet can think of nobody else. Your merits, my dear, but aggravate your fault.—Something of fresh aggravation almost every hour.—How can any favour be expected?

I am sorry for it; but am afraid nothing you ask will be complied with.

Why mention you, my dear, the saving you from mortifications, who have gone off with a man? What a poor pride is it to stand upon any-thing else?

I dare not open my lips in your favour. Nobody dare. Your letter must stand by itself. This has caused me to send it to Harlowe Place. Expect therefore great severity. May you be enabled to support the lot you have drawn! O my dear! how unhappy have you made every-body! Can *you* expect to be happy? Your father wishes you had never been born. Your poor mother—But why should I afflict you? There is now no help!—You must be changed indeed, if you are not very unhappy yourself in the reflections your thoughtful mind must suggest to you.

You must now make the best of your lot. Yet *not* married, it seems!

It is in your power you say, to perform whatever you shall undertake to do. You may deceive yourself: you hope that your reputation and the favour of your friends may be retrieved. Never, never, both, I doubt; if either. Every offended person (and that is all who loved you, and are related to you) must *join* to restore you: when can these be of *one* mind in a case so notoriously wrong?

It would be very grievous, you say, to be precipitated upon measures, that may make the desirable reconciliation more difficult. Is it *now*, my dear, a time for you to be afraid of being *precipitated?* At *present*, if *ever*, there can be no thought of reconciliation. The *upshot* of your precipitation must first be seen. There may be murder yet, as far as we know. Will the man you are with part willingly with you? If *not*, what may be the consequence? If he *will*—Lord bless me! what shall we think of his reasons for it?—I will fly this thought. I know your purity—But, my dear, are you not out of all protection?—Are you not unmarried?—Have you not (making your daily prayers useless) thrown yourself into temptation? And is not the man the most wicked of plotters?

You have hitherto, you say (and I think, my dear, with an air unbecoming your declared penitence) *no fault to find with the behaviour of a man from whom every evil was apprehended*: like Cæsar to the Roman augur, which I heard you tell of, who had bid him *beware of the ides of March*: '*The ides of March*,' said Cæsar, seeing the augur among the crowd, as he marched in state to the senate-house, from which he never was to return alive, '*the ides of March are come.*'—'*But they are not past*,' the augur replied. Make the application, my dear: may you be able to make this reflection upon his good behaviour to the last of your knowledge of him! May he behave himself better to you, than he ever did to anybody else over whom he had power! Amen!

No answer, I beseech you. I hope your messenger will not tell any-body that I have written to you. And I dare say you will not shew what I have written to Mr. Lovelace—For I have written with the less reserve, depending upon your prudence.

You have my prayers.

My Dolly knows not that I write. Nobody does *: not even Mr. Hervey.

Dolly would have several times written: but having defended your fault with heat, and with a partiality that alarmed us, [such a fall as yours, my dear, must be alarming to all parents] she has been forbidden, on pain of losing our favour for ever: and this at your family's request, as well as by her father's commands.

You have the poor girl's hourly prayers. I will, however, tell you, though she knows not what I do, as well as those of *your truly afflicted aunt*,

D. HERVEY.

FRIDAY, APRIL 21.

* Notwithstanding what Mrs. Hervey here says, it will be hereafter seen that this severe letter of hers was written in private concert with the implacable Arabella.

LETTER

LETTER XLIX.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

WITH THE PRECEDING.

SAT. MORN. APRIL 22.

I Have juſt now received the incloſed from my aunt Hervey. Be pleaſed, my dear, to keep her ſecret of having written to the unhappy wretch her niece.

I may go to London, I ſee, or where I will. No matter what becomes of me.

I was the willinger to ſuſpend my journey thither, till I heard from Harlowe Place. I thought, if I could be encouraged to hope for a reconciliation, I would let this man ſee, that he ſhould not have me in his power, but upon my own terms, if at all.

But I find I muſt be *his*, whether I will or not; and perhaps through ſtill greater mortifications than thoſe great ones which I have already met with—And muſt I be ſo abſolutely thrown upon a man, with whom I am not at all ſatisfied!

My letter is ſent, you ſee, to Harlowe Place. My heart aches for the reception it may meet with there.

One comfort only ariſes to me from it's being ſent; that my aunt will clear *herſelf* by the communication, from the ſuppoſition of having correſponded with the poor creature whom they have all determined to reprobate. It is no ſmall part of my misfortune that I have weakened the confidence one dear friend has in another, and made one look cool upon another. My poor couſin Dolly, you ſee, has reaſon to regret on this account, as well as my aunt. Miſs Howe, my dear Miſs Howe, is but too ſenſible of the effects of my fault, having had more words with her mother on my account, than ever ſhe had on any other. Yet the man who has drawn me into all this evil, I muſt be thrown upon!—Much did I conſider, much did I apprehend, *before* my fault, ſuppoſing I *were* to be guilty of it: but I ſaw it not in all it's ſhocking lights.

And now, to know that my father, an hour before he received the tidings of my ſuppoſed flight, owned that he loved me as his life: that he would have been all condeſcenſion: that he would—Oh! my dear, how tender, how mortifyingly tender, now in him! My aunt need not have been afraid, that it ſhould be known that ſhe has ſent me ſuch a letter as this!—A father to KNEEL to his child!—There would not indeed have been any bearing of that!—What I ſhould have done in ſuch a caſe, I know not. Death would have been much more welcome to me than ſuch a ſight, on ſuch an occaſion, in behalf of a man ſo very, very diſguſtful to me!—But I had deſerved annihilation, had I ſuffered my father to kneel in vain.

Yet, had but the ſacrifice of *inclination* and *perſonal preference* been *all*, leſs than KNEELING ſhould have done. My *duty* ſhould have been the conqueror of my *inclination*. But an averſion—an averſion ſo *very* ſincere!—The triumph of a cruel and ambitious brother, ever ſo uncontroulable, joined with the inſults of an envious ſiſter, bringing wills to *theirs*, which otherwiſe would have been favourable to *mine*: the marriage duties, ſo abſolutely indiſpenſable, ſo ſolemnly to be engaged for: the marriage-intimacies [permit me to ſay to you, my friend, what the pureſt, although with apprehenſion, muſt think of] ſo *very* intimate: myſelf one, who never looked upon any duty, much leſs a voluntary-vowed one, with indifference; could it have been honeſt in me to have given my hand to an odious hand, and to have conſented to ſuch a more than reluctant, ſuch an *immiſcible* union, if I may ſo call it?—For life too!—Did I not *think* more and deeper than moſt young creatures think; did I not *weigh*, did I not *reflect*; I might perhaps have been leſs obſtinate.—*Delicacy*, (may I preſume to call it?) *thinking*, *weighing*, *reflection*, are not bleſſings (I have not found them ſuch) in the degree I have them. I wiſh I had been able, in ſome very nice caſes, to have known what *indifference* was; yet not to have my *ignorance* imputable to me as a fault. Oh! my dear! the finer ſenſibilities, if I may ſuppoſe mine to be ſuch, make not happy!

What a method had my friends intended to take with me? This, I dare ſay, was a method chalked out by my brother. *He*, I ſuppoſe, was to have preſented me to all my aſſembled friends, as the daughter capable of preferring her own will to the wills of them all. It would

have been a sore trial, no doubt. Would to Heaven, however, I had stood it—Let the issue have been what it would, would to Heaven I had stood it!

There may be murder, my aunt says. This looks as if she knew of Singleton's rash plot. Such an *upshot*, as *she* calls it, of this unhappy affair, Heaven avert!

She flies a thought, that I can *less* dwell upon—A *cruel* thought—But she has a poor opinion of the purity she compliments me with, if she thinks that I am not, by GOD's grace, above temptation, from this sex. Although I never saw a man, whose *person* I could like, before this man; yet his faulty character allowed me but little merit from the indifference I pretended to on his account. But, now I see him *in nearer lights*, I like him less than ever. Unpolite, cruel, insolent!—Unwise! A trifler with his own happiness; the destroyer of mine!—His last treatment —*My fate too visibly in his power— Master of his own wishes*, [shame to say it!] *if he knew what to wish for.* —Indeed I never liked him so little as now. Upon my word, I think I could hate him (if I do not already hate him) sooner than any man I ever thought tolerably of—A good reason why: because I have been more disappointed in my expectations of him; although they never were so high, *as to have made him my choice in preference to the single life, had that been permitted me.* Still, if the giving him up for ever will make my path to reconciliation easy, and if they will signify as much to me, they shall see that I never will be *his*: for I have the vanity to think my soul his soul's superior.

You will say I rave: forbidden to write to my aunt, and taught to despair of reconciliation, you, my dear, must be troubled with my passionate resentments. What a wretch was I to give him a meeting, since by that I put it out of my power to meet my assembled friends!—All would now, if I had met them, have been over; and who can tell when my present distresses will?—Rid of both men, I had been now perhaps at my aunt Hervey's, or at my uncle Antony's; wishing for my cousin Morden's arrival; who might have accommodated all.

I *intended*, indeed, to have stood it; and, if I had, how know I by whose name I might now have been called? For how should I have resisted a condescending, a *kneeling* father, had he been able to have kept his temper with me?

Yet my aunt says, he would have relented, if *I* had not. Perhaps he would have been moved by my humility, before he could have shewn such *undue* condescension. Such temper as he would have received me with, might have been improved upon in my favour. And that he had designed *ultimately* to relent, how it clears my friends, (at least to themselves) and condemns me! O why were my aunt's hints [I remember them now] so very dark?—Yet I intended to have returned after the interview; and then perhaps she would have explained herself.—O this artful, this designing Lovelace—Yet I must repeat, that most ought I to blame myself for meeting him.

But far, far, be banished from me fruitless recrimination! Far banished, *because* fruitless? Let me wrap myself about in the mantle of my own integrity, and take comfort in my unfaulty intention! Since it is now too late to look back, let me collect all my fortitude, and endeavour to stand those shafts of angry Providence, which it will not permit me to shun! That whatever the trials may be, which I am destined to undergo, I may not behave unworthily in them; and may come out amended by them.

Join with me in this prayer, my beloved friend; for your own honour's sake, as well as for love's sake, join with me in it: lest a deviation on my side should, with the censorious, cast a shade upon a friendship, which has no levity in it; and the basis of which is improvement, as well in the greater as lesser duties.

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER L.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON, APRIL 22.

O My best, my *only* friend! Now indeed is my heart broken! It has received a blow it never will recover. Think not of corresponding with a wretch who now seems absolutely devoted. How can it be otherwise, if a parent's

parent's curſes have the weight I always attributed to them, and have heard ſo many inſtances in confirmation of that weight!—Yes, my dear Miſs Howe, ſuperadded to all my afflictions, I have the conſequences of a father's curſe to ſtruggle with! How ſhall I ſupport this reflection!—My paſt and my preſent ſituation ſo much authorizing my apprehenſions!

I have, at laſt, a letter from my unrelenting ſiſter. Would to Heaven I had not provoked it by my ſecond letter to my aunt Hervey! It lay ready for me, it ſeems. The thunder ſlept, till I awakened it. I incloſe the letter itſelf. Tranſcribe it I cannot. There is no bearing the thoughts of it: for [ſhocking reflection!] the curſe extends to the life beyond this.

I am in the depth of vapouriſh deſpondency. I can only repeat, Shun, fly, correſpond not with a wretch ſo devoted, as

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER LI.

TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

TO BE LEFT AT MR. OSGOOD'S, NEAR SOHO SQUARE.

FRIDAY, APRIL 21.

IT was *expected* you would ſend again to me, or to my aunt Hervey. The incloſed has lain ready for you therefore by direction. You will have no anſwer from any-body, write to *whom* you will, and as *often* as you will, and *what* you will.

It was deſigned to bring you back by proper authority, or to ſend you whither the diſgraces you have brought upon us all, ſhould be in the likelieſt way, after a while, to be forgotten. But I believe that deſign is over: ſo you may *range* ſecurely—Nobody will think it worth while to give themſelves any trouble about you. Yet my mother has obtained leave to ſend you your cloaths of all ſorts: but your cloaths only. This is a favour you'll ſee by the within letter not *deſigned* you: and *now* not granted for your ſake, but becauſe my poor mother cannot bear in her ſight any-thing you uſed to wear. Read the incloſed, and tremble.

ARABELLA HARLOWE.

'TO THE MOST UNGRATEFUL AND 'UNDUTIFUL OF DAUGHTERS.

'HARLOWE PLACE, APRIL 15.

'SISTER THAT WAS!

'FOR I know not what name you 'are *permitted*, or *chuſe* to go by. 'You have filled us all with diſtraction. My father, in the firſt agitations of his mind, on diſcovering your wicked, your ſhameful elopement, imprecated on his knees, a fearful curſe upon you. Tremble at the recital of it!—No leſs, than that you may meet your puniſhment both *here* and *hereafter*, by means of the very wretch, in whom you have choſen to place your wicked confidence.

'Your cloaths will not be ſent you. 'You ſeem, by leaving them behind you, to have been ſecure of them, whenever you demanded them; but perhaps you could think of nothing but meeting your fellow:—nothing but how to get off your forward ſelf! —For every-thing ſeems to have been forgotten but what was to contribute to your wicked flight—Yet you judged right, perhaps, that you would have been detected, had you endeavoured to get away your cloaths.—Cunning creature! not to make *one* ſtep that we could gueſs at you by! Cunning to effect your own ruin, and the diſgrace of all the family!

'But does the wretch put you upon writing for your things, for fear you ſhould be too expenſive to him?—That's it, I ſuppoſe.

'Was there ever a giddier creature? —Yet this is the celebrated, the blazing Clariſſa—Clariſſa, *what? Harlowe*, no doubt!—And Harlowe it will be, to the diſgrace of us all!

'Your drawings and your pieces are all taken down; as is alſo your own whole-length picture, in the Vandyke taſte, from your late parlour: they are taken down, and thrown into your cloſet, which will be nailed up, as if it were not a part of the houſe, there to periſh together: for who can bear to ſee them? Yet, how did they uſe to be ſhewn to every-body; the former, for the magnifying of your dainty finger works; the latter, for the imputed dignity (dignity now in the duſt!) of your boaſted figure; and this by thoſe fond parents from whom

'you

'you have run away with so *much*, yet 'with so little contrivance!

'My brother vows revenge upon 'your libertine—For the *family's* sake 'he vows it—Not for *yours!*—For he 'will treat you, he declares, like a 'common creature, if ever he sees you: 'and doubts not that this will be your 'fate.

'My uncle Harlowe renounces you 'for ever.

'So does my uncle Antony.

'So does my aunt Hervey.

'So do *I*, base unworthy creature! 'the disgrace of a good family, and 'the property of an infamous rake, as 'questionless you will soon find your-'self, if you are not already.

'Your books, since they have not 'taught you what belongs to your fa-'mily, to your sex, and to your edu-'cation, will not be sent you. Your 'money neither. Nor yet the jewels 'so undeservedly made yours. For it 'is wished you may be seen a beggar 'along London streets.

'If all this is heavy, lay your hand 'to your heart, and ask yourself, Why 'you have deserved it?

'Every man whom your pride taught 'you to reject with scorn, (Mr. Solmes 'excepted, who, however, has reason 'to rejoice that he missed you) triumphs 'in your shameful elopement; and now 'knows how to account for his being 'refused.

'Your worthy Norton is ashamed of 'you, and mingles her tears with your 'mother's; both reproaching them-'selves for their shares in you, and in 'so fruitless an education.

'Every-body, in short, is ashamed 'of you: but none more than

'ARABELLA HARLOWE.'

LETTER LII.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

TUESDAY, APRIL 25.

BE comforted; be not dejected; do not despond, my dearest and best-beloved friend. God Almighty is just and gracious, and gives not his assent to rash and inhuman curses. Can you think that Heaven will seal to the black passions of it's depraved creatures? If it did, malice, envy, and revenge, would triumph; and the best of the human race, blasted by the malignity of the worst, would be miserable in both worlds.

This outrageousness shews only what manner of spirit they are of, and how much their sordid views exceed their parental love. 'Tis all owing to rage and disappointment—Disappointment in designs proper to be frustrated.

If you consider this malediction as it ought to be considered, a person of your piety must and will rather pity and pray for your *rash father*, than terrify *yourself* on the occasion. None but God can curse. Parents, or others, whoever they be, can only pray to him to curse: and such prayers can have no weight with a just and all-perfect Being, the motives to which are unreasonable, and the end proposed by them cruel.

Has not God commanded us *to bless and curse not?* Pray for your father then, I repeat, that he incur not the malediction he has announced on you; since he has broken, as you see, a command truly divine; while you, by obeying that other precept which enjoins us *to pray for them that persecute and curse us*, will turn the curse into a blessing.

My mother blames them for this wicked letter of your sister; and she pities you; and, of her own accord, wished me to write to comfort you, for this once; for she says, It is pity your heart, which was so noble, (and when the sense of your fault, and the weight of a parent's curse, are so strong upon you) should be quite broken.

Lord bless me, how your aunt writes! —Can there be two rights and two wrongs in palpable cases!—But, my dear, she *must* be wrong: so they all have been, justify themselves now as they will. They can only justify themselves *to* themselves from selfish principles, resolving to *acquit*, not fairly to *try* themselves. Did your unkind aunt, in all the tedious progress of your contentions with them, give you the least hope of their relenting?—Her dark hints now I recollect, as well as you. But why was any-thing good or hopeful to be darkly hinted?—How easy was it for *her*, who pretended always to love you; for *her*, who can give such flowing licence to her pen for your hurt; to have given

given you one word, one line (in confidence) of their pretended change of measures!

But do not mind their after-pretences, my dear—All of them serve but for tacit confessions of their vile usage of you. I will keep your aunt's secret, never fear. I would not, on any consideration, that my mother should see her letter.

You will now see, that you have nothing left, but to overcome all scrupulousness, and marry as soon as you have an opportunity. Determine so to do, my dear.

I will give you a motive for it, regarding myself. For this I have resolved, and this I have vowed, [O friend, the best beloved of my heart, be not angry with me for it!] That so long as your happiness is in suspense, I will never think of marrying. In justice to the man I shall have, I have vowed this: for, my dear, must not I be miserable, if you are so? And what an unworthy wife must I be to any man who cannot have interest enough in my heart to make his obligingness a balance for an affliction he has not caused?

I would shew Lovelace your sister's abominable letter, were it to me. I inclose it. It shall not have a place in this house. This will enter him of course into the subject which now you ought to have most in view. Let him see what you suffer for him. He cannot prove base to such an excellence. I should never enjoy my head or my senses, should this man prove a villain to you! —With a merit so exalted, you may have punishment more than enough for your involuntary fault in that husband.

I would not have you be too sure, that their project to seize you is over. The words intimating that it *is* over, in the letter of that abominable Arabella, seem calculated to give you security.—She only says, she *believes* that design is over.—And I do not yet find from Miss Lloyd, that it is disavowed. So it will be best, when you are in London, to be private, and, for fear of the worst, to let every direction be to a *third place*; for I would not, for the world, have you fall into the hands of such flaming and malevolent spirits by surprize.

I will myself be content to direct to you at *some third place*; and I shall then be able to aver to my mother, or to any other, if occasion be, *that I know not where you are*.

Besides, this measure will make you less apprehensive of the consequences of their violence, should they resolve to attempt to carry you off in spite of Lovelace.

I would have you direct to Mr. Hickman, even your answer to this. I have a reason for it. Besides, my mother, notwithstanding this particular indulgence, is very positive. They have prevailed upon her, I know, to give her word to this purpose—Spiteful poor wretches! How I hate in particular your foolish uncle Antony.

I would not have your thoughts dwell on the contents of your sister's shocking letter; but pursue other subjects—The subjects before you. And let me know your progress with Lovelace, and what he says to this diabolical curse. So far you may enter into this hateful subject. I expect that this will aptly introduce the grand topick between you, without needing a mediator.

Come, my dear, when things are at worst, they will mend. Good often comes, when evil is expected.—But if you despond, there can be no hopes of cure. Don't let them break your heart; for that is plain to me, is now what some people have in view to do.

How poor, to withold from you your books, your jewels, and your money! As money is all you can at present want, since they will vouchsafe to send your cloaths, I send fifty guineas by the bearer, inclosed in single papers in my *Norris's Miscellanies*. I charge you, as you love me, return them not.

I have more at your service. So if you like not your lodgings or his behaviour when you get to town, leave both them and him out of hand.

I would advise you to write to Mr. Morden without delay. If he intends for England, it may hasten him. And you will do very well till he can come. But surely Lovelace will be infatuated, if he secure not his happiness by *your consent*, before that of Mr. Morden's is made needful on his arrival.

Once more, my dear, let me beg of you to be comforted. Manage with your usual prudence the stake before you, and all will still be happy. Suppose yourself to be *me*, and me to be

you,

you, [You *may*—for your diſtreſs is *mine*;] and then you will add full day to theſe but glimmering lights which are held out to you by *your ever-affectionate and faithful*

ANNA HOWE.

I hurry this away by Robert. I will enquire into the truth of your aunt's pretences about the change of meaſures which ſhe ſays they intended in caſe you had not gone away.

LETTER LIII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, APRIL 26.

YOUR letter, my beloved Miſs Howe, gives me great comfort. How ſweetly do I experience the truth of the wiſe man's obſervation, *That a faithful friend is the medicine of life!*

Your meſſenger finds me juſt ſetting out for London: the chaiſe at the door. Already I have taken leave of the good widow, who has obliged me with the company of her eldeſt daughter, at Mr. Lovelace's requeſt, while he rides by us. The young gentlewoman is to return in two or three days with the chaiſe, in it's way to my Lord M.'s Hertfordſhire ſeat.

I received my ſiſter's dreadful letter on Sunday, when Mr. Lovelace was out. He ſaw, on his return, my *extreme anguiſh and dejection*; and he was told *how much worſe I had been:* for I had fainted away more than once.

I think the contents of it have touched my head as well as my heart.

He would fain have ſeen it. But I would not permit that, becauſe of the threatenings he would have found in it againſt himſelf. As it *was*, the effect it had upon me, made him break out into execrations and menaces. I was ſo ill, that he himſelf adviſed me to delay going to town on Monday, as I propoſed to do.

He is extremely regardful and tender of me. All that you ſuppoſed *would* follow this violent letter, from him, *has* followed it. He has offered himſelf to my acceptance, in ſo unreſerved a manner, that I am concerned I have written ſo freely and ſo diffidently of him. Pray, my deareſt friend, keep to yourſelf every-thing that may appear diſreputable of him from me.

I muſt acquaint you, that his kind behaviour, and my low-ſpiritedneſs, co-operating with your former advice, and my unhappy ſituation, made me that very Sunday evening *receive unreſervedly his declarations:* and now indeed I am more in his power than ever.

He preſſes me every hour [indeed as *needleſsly*, as *unkindly*] for freſh tokens of my eſteem *for* him, and confidence in him. And, as I have been brought to *ſome verbal conceſſions*, if he ſhould prove unworthy, I am ſure, I ſhall have great reaſon to blame this violent letter: for I have no reſolution at all. Abandoned thus of all my natural friends, of whoſe returning favour I have now no hopes, and only you to pity me, and *you* reſtrained, as I may ſay, I have been forced to turn my deſolate heart to ſuch protection as I could find.

All my comfort is, that your advice repeatedly given to the ſame purpoſe, in your kind letter before me, warrants me. I now ſet out the more chearfully to London on that account: for before, a heavy weight hung upon my heart; and, although I thought it beſt and ſafeſt to go, yet my ſpirits ſunk, I know not why, at every motion I made towards a preparation for it.

I hope no miſchief will happen on the road.—I hope theſe violent ſpirits will not meet.

Every-one is waiting for me.—Pardon me, my beſt, my kindeſt friend, that I return your Norris. In theſe more promiſing proſpects, I cannot have occaſion for your favour. Beſides, I have ſome hope, that with my cloaths they will ſend me the money I wrote for, although it is denied me in the letter. If they do not, and if I ſhould have occaſion, I can but ſignify my wants to ſo ready a friend. And I have promiſed to be obliged only to you. But I had rather, methinks, you ſhould have it *ſtill to ſay*, if challenged, that nothing of this nature has been either requeſted or done. I ſay this, with a view entirely to my future hopes of recovering your mother's favour, which, next to that of my own father and mother, I am moſt ſolicitous to recover.

I muſt acquaint you with one thing more, notwithſtanding my hurry; and that

that is, that Mr. Lovelace offered either to attend me to Lord M.'s, or to send for his chaplain, yesterday. He pressed me to consent to this proposal, most earnestly; and even seemed desirous rather to have the ceremony pass here, than in London: for when there, I had told him, it was time enough to consider of so weighty and important a matter. Now, upon the receipt of your kind, your consolatory letter, methinks I could almost wish it had been *in my power* to comply with his earnest solicitations. But this dreadful letter *has unhinged my whole frame*. Then some *little punctilio* surely is necessary. No preparation made. No articles drawn. No licence ready. Grief so extreme: no pleasure in prospect, nor so much as in wish—O my dear, who could think of entering into so solemn an engagement? Who, *so* unprepared, could seem to be *so* ready!

If I could flatter myself, that my indifference to all the joys of this life proceeded from *proper* motives, and not rather from the disappointments and mortifications my pride has met with, how much rather, I think, should I chuse to be wedded to my shroud, than to any man on earth!

Indeed I have at present no pleasure, but in *your* friendship. Continue that to me, I beseech you. If my heart rises hereafter to a capacity of more, it must be built on that foundation.

My spirits sink again, on setting out. Excuse this depth of vapourish dejection, which forbids me even *hope*, the cordial that keeps life from stagnating, and which never was denied me till within these eight-and-forty hours.

But it is time to relieve you.

Adieu, my best beloved and kindest friend! Pray for your

CLARISSA.

LETTER LIV.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

THURSDAY, APRIL 27.

I Am sorry you sent back my Norris. But you must be allowed to do as you please. So must I, in my turn. We must neither of us, perhaps, expect absolutely of the other what is the rightest to be done: and yet few folks, so young as we are, *better* know, *what that right is*. I cannot separate myself from you; although I give a double instance of my vanity in joining myself with you in this particular assertion.

I am most heartily rejoiced, that your prospects are so much mended; and that, as I hoped, good has been produced out of evil. What must the man have been, what must have been his views, had he not taken such a turn, upon a letter so vile, and upon a treatment so unnatural; himself principally the occasion of it?

You *know best* your *motives* for suspending: but I wish you *could* have taken him at offers so earnest*. Why should you not have permitted him to send for Lord M.'s chaplain? If punctilio only was in the way, and want of a licence, and of proper preparations, and such-like, my service to you, my dear: and there is ceremony tantamount to your ceremony.

Do not, do not, my dear friend, *again* be so very melancholy a decliner, as to prefer a shroud, when the matter you wish for is in your power; and when, as you have justly said heretofore, persons *cannot die when they will*.

But it is a strange perverseness in human nature, that we slight that when near us, which at a distance we wish for.

You have now but one point to pursue; that is marriage: let that be solemnized. Leave the rest to Providence; and, to use your own words in a former letter, follow as that leads. You will have a handsome man; a genteel man; he would be a *wise* man, if he were not vain of his endowments, and wild and intriguing: but while the eyes of many of our sex, taken by so specious a form and so brilliant a spirit, encourage that vanity, you must be contented to stay till grey hairs and prudence enter upon the stage together. You would not have every-thing in the same man.

I believe Mr. Hickman treads no crooked paths; but he hobbles most ungracefully in a strait one. Yet Mr.

* Mr. Lovelace in his next letter tells his friend how extremely ill the lady was; recovering from fits to fall into stronger fits, and nobody expecting her life. She had not, he says, acquainted Miss Howe, how *very* ill she was. In Page 417, she tells Miss Howe, that her motives for suspending were not *merely ceremonious* ones.

Hickman, though he *pleases* not my eye, nor *diverts* my ear, will not, as I believe, *disgust* the one, nor *shock* the other. Your man, as I have lately said, will always keep up attention; you will always be alive with him, though perhaps more from fears than hopes: while Mr. Hickman will neither say anything to keep one awake; nor yet, by shocking adventures, make one's slumbers uneasy.

I believe I now know which of the two men so prudent a person as *you* would, at first, have chosen; nor doubt I, that you can guess which *I* would have made choice of, if I might. But proud as we are, the proudest of us all can *only* refuse, and many of us accept the but half-worthy, for fear a still worse should offer.

If men had chosen their mistresses for spirits like their own, although Mr. Lovelace, at the long run, might have been *too many for me*, I don't doubt but I should have given heart-ache for heart-ache, for one half-year at least; while you, with my dull-swift, would have glided on *as* serenely, *as* calmly, *as* unaccountably, as the succeeding seasons; and varying no otherwise than they, to bring on new beauties and conveniences to all about you.

* *

I was going on in this stile—But my mother broke in upon me, with a prohibitory aspect. She gave me leave for one letter only.—She had just parted with your odious uncle; and they have been in close conference again.

She has vexed me. I must lay this by till I hear from you again; not knowing whither to send it.

Direct me to a *third-place*, as I desired in my former.

I told my mother, (on her challenging me) that I was writing indeed, and to you: but it was only to amuse myself; for I protested, *that I knew not where to send to you.*

I hope that your next may inform me of your nuptials, although the next to that were to acquaint me, that he was the ungratefullest monster on earth; as he must be, if not the kindest husband in it.

My mother has vexed me. But so, on reviving, I wrote before.—But she has *unhinged me*, as you call it: pretended to catechize Hickman, I assure you, for contributing to our supposed correspondence. Catechized him *severely* too, upon my word!—I believe I have a sneaking kindness for the sneaking fellow; for I cannot endure that any-body should treat him like a fool but myself.

I believe, between you and me, the good lady forgot herself. I heard her loud. She possibly imagined, that my father was come to life again.—Yet the meekness of the man might have soon convinced her, I should have thought; for my father, it seems, would talk as loud as she, I suppose, (though within a few yards of each other) as if both were out of their way, and were hallooing at half a mile's distance, to get in again.

I know you'll blame me for this saucineſs—But I told you I was vexed: and if I had not a spirit, my parentage on both sides might be doubted.

You must not chide me too severely, however, because I have learned of you not to defend myself in an error: and I own I am wrong; and that's enough: you won't be so generous in this case, as you are in every other, if you don't think it is.

Adieu, my dear! I must, I will love you; and love you for ever! So subscribes your

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER LV.

FROM MISS HOWE. INCLOSED IN THE ABOVE.

THURSDAY, APRIL 27.

I Have been making enquiry, as I told you I would, whether your relations had really (before you left them) resolved upon that change of measures which your aunt mentions in her letter; and by laying together several pieces of intelligence, some drawn from my mother, through your uncle Antony's communications; some from Miss Lloyd, by your sister's; and some by a third way, that I shall not tell you of; I have reason to think the following a true state of the case.

That there was no intention of a change of measures, till within two or three days of your going away. On the contrary, your brother and sister, though they had no hope of prevailing with you in Solmes's favour, were resolved never

to

to give over their perſecutions till they had puſhed you upon taking ſome ſtep, which, by help of *their good offices*, ſhould be deemed inexcuſable by the half witted ſouls they had to play upon.

But that at laſt your mother (tired with and perhaps aſhamed of the paſſive part ſhe had acted) thought fit to declare to Miſs Bell, that ſhe was determined to try to put an end to the family-feuds; and to get your uncle Harlowe to ſecond her endeavours.

This alarmed your brother and ſiſter; and then a change of meaſures was reſolved upon. Solmes's offers were, however, too advantageous to be given up; and your father's condeſcenſion was now to be their ſole dependence, and (as *they* give it out) the trying of what that would do with you, their laſt effort.

And, indeed, my dear, this muſt have ſucceeded, I verily think, with ſuch a daughter as they had to deal with, could that father who never, I dare ſay, kneeled in his life but to his God, have ſo far condeſcended as your aunt writes he would.

But then, my dear, what would this have done?—Perhaps you would have given Lovelace the *meeting*, in hopes to pacify him, and prevent miſchief; ſuppoſing that they had given you time, and not hurried you directly into the ſtate. But if you had *not* met him, you ſee, that he was reſolved to viſit them, and well attended too: and what muſt have been the conſequence?

So that, upon the whole, we know not but matters may be beſt as they *are*, however diſagreeable that *beſt* is.

I hope your conſiderate and thoughtful mind will make a good uſe of this hint. Who would not with patience ſuſtain even a great evil, if ſhe could perſuade herſelf, that it was kindly diſpenſed, in order to prevent a *ſtill* greater?—Eſpecially, if ſhe could ſit down, as you can, and acquit her own heart?

Permit me one further obſervation—Do we not ſee, from the above ſtate of the matter, what might have been done before, *by the worthy perſon* of your family, had ſhe exerted the *mother*, in behalf of a child ſo meritorious, yet ſo much oppreſſed?

Adieu, my dear. I will be ever yours.

ANNA HOWE.

Clariſſa, in her anſwer to the firſt of the two laſt letters, chides her friend for giving ſo little weight to her advice, in relation to her behaviour to her mother. It may be proper to inſert here the following extracts from that anſwer; though a little before the time.

'You aſſume, my dear,' *ſays ſhe*, 'your 'uſual, and ever-agreeable ſtile, in what 'you write of the two gentlemen*, and 'how unaptly you think they have choſen; 'Mr. Hickman in addreſſing you; Mr. 'Lovelace me. But I am inclinable to 'believe, that with a view to happineſs, 'however two mild tempers might agree, 'two high ones would make ſad work of 'it, both at one time violent and unyielding. You two might indeed have ra'queted the ball betwixt you, as you 'ſay†. But Mr. Hickman, by his gentle manners, ſeems formed for you, if 'you go not too far with him. If you 'do, it would be a tameneſs in him to 'bear it, which would make a man more 'contemptible than Mr. Hickman can 'ever deſerve to be made. Nor is it a 'diſgrace for even a brave man, who 'knows what a woman is, to vow to him '*afterwards*, to be very obſequious *be*'*foreband*.

'Do you think it is to the credit of 'Mr. Lovelace's character, that he can 'be offenſive and violent?—Does he not, 'as all ſuch ſpirits muſt, ſubject himſelf 'to the neceſſity of making ſubmiſſions 'for his exceſſes, far more mortifying to 'a proud heart than thoſe condeſcenſions 'which the high-ſpirited are ſo apt to 'impute as a weakneſs of mind in ſuch 'a man as Mr. Hickman?

'Let me tell you, my dear, that Mr. 'Hickman is ſuch a one, as would rather 'bear an affront *from* a lady, than offer 'one *to* her. He had rather, I dare ſay, 'that ſhe ſhould have occaſion to aſk *his* 'pardon, than he *hers*. But, my dear, '*you have outlived your firſt paſſion*; and 'had the ſecond man been an angel, he 'would not have been more than indiffe'rent to you.

'My motives for ſuſpending,' *proceeds ſhe*, 'were not *merely ceremonious ones*. 'I was really very ill. I could not hold 'up my head. The contents of my ſiſter's 'letters had pierced my heart. Indeed, 'my dear, I was *very* ill. And was I,

* See Page 416, and Page 373. † Page 373.

'moreover, to be as ready to accept his 'offer, as if I were afraid *he never would 'repeat it?*

'I see with great regret, that your 'mamma is still immoveably bent against 'our correspondence. What shall I do 'about it?—It goes against me to con- 'tinue it, or to wish you to favour me 'with returns.—Yet I have so managed 'my matters, that I have no friend but 'you to advise with. It is enough to 'make one, indeed, wish to be married 'to this man, though a man of errors; 'as he has worthy relations of my own 'sex; and I should have some friends, I 'hope—And having *some*, I might have '*more*.—For as money is said to increase 'money, so does the countenance of per- 'sons of character increase friends: while 'the destitute *must* be destitute.—It goes 'against my heart to beg of you to dis- 'continue corresponding with me; and 'yet it is against my conscience to carry 'it on against parental prohibition. But 'I dare not use all the arguments against 'it that I could use—And why?—For 'fear I should convince you; and you 'should reject me as the rest of my friends 'have done. I leave, therefore, the de- 'termination of this point upon you.— 'I am not, I find, to be trusted with it. 'But be *mine* all the fault, and all the 'punishment, if it be punishable!—And 'certainly it must, when it can be the 'cause of those over-lively sentences 'wherewith you conclude the letter I 'have before me, and which I must no 'farther animadvert upon, because you 'forbid me to do so.'

To the second letter, among other things, she says,

'So, my dear, you seem to think, that 'there was a *fate* in my error. The cor- 'dial, the considerate friend is seen in the 'observation you make on this occasion. 'Yet since things have happened as they 'have, would to Heaven I could hear, 'that all the world acquitted my father, 'or, at least, my mother! whose charac- 'ter, before these family-feuds broke out, 'was the subject of every one's admira- 'tion. Don't let any-body say from you, 'so that it may come to *her* ear, that she 'might, by a timely exertion of her fine 'talents, have saved her unhappy child. 'You will observe, my dear, that *in her 'own good time*, when she saw that there 'was not likely to be an end to my bro- 'ther's persecutions, she resolved to exert 'herself. But the pragmatical daughter, '*by the fatal meeting*, precipitated all, 'and frustrated her indulgent designs. 'O my love, I am now convinced, by 'dear experience, that while children 'are so happy as to have parents or 'guardians, whom they *may* consult, 'they should not presume (no, not with 'the best and purest intentions) to fol- 'low their own conceits, in material 'cases.

'A ray of hope of future reconciliation 'darts in upon my mind, from the in- 'tention you tell me my mother had to 'exert herself in my favour, had I not 'gone away. And my hope is the 'stronger, as this communication points 'out to me, that my *uncle Harlowe's 'interest* is likely, in my mother's opi- 'nion, to be of weight, if it could be 'engaged. It will behove me, perhaps, 'to apply to that dear uncle, if a pro- 'per occasion offer.'

LETTER LVI.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BEL- FORD, ESQ.

MONDAY, APRIL 24.

FATE is weaving a whimsical web for thy friend; and I see not but I shall be inevitably manacled.

Here have I been at work, dig, dig, dig, like a cunning miner, at one time, and spreading my snares, like an art- ful fowler, at another, and exulting in my contrivances to get this inimitable creature absolutely into my power. Every-thing made for me. Her brother and uncles were but my pioneers: her father stormed as I directed him to storm. Mrs. Howe was acted by the springs I set at work: her daughter was moving for me, and yet imagined her- self plumb against me: and the dear creature herself had already run her stubborn neck into my gin, and knew not that she was caught, for I had not drawn my springes close about her— And just as all this was compleated, wouldst thou believe, that I should be my own enemy, and her friend?—That I should be so totally diverted from all my favourite purposes, as to propose to marry her before I went to town, in or- der to put it out of my own power to resume them?

When thou knowest this, wilt thou not think that my black angel plays me booty, and has taken it into his head

to

to urge me on to the indissoluble tie, that he might be more sure of me (from the complex transgressions to which he will certainly stimulate me, when wedded) than perhaps he thought he could be from the simple sins, in which I have so long allowed myself, that they seem to have the plea of habit.

Thou wilt be still the more surprized, when I tell thee, that there seems to be a coalition going forward between the black angels and the white ones; for here has hers induced her in one hour, and by one retrograde accident, to *acknowledge*, what the charming creature never before acknowledged, a preferable favour for me. She even avows an intention to be mine—Mine, without reformation-conditions.—She permits me to talk of love to her: of the irrevocable ceremony: yet, another extraordinary! postpones that ceremony; chuses to set out for London; and even to go to the widow's in town.

'Well, but how comes all this about?' methinks thou askest.—'Thou, Lovelace, dealest in wonders; yet aimest not at the *marvellous*—How did all this come about?'

I will tell thee—I was *in danger of losing my charmer for ever*.—She was soaring upward to her native skies. She was got above the earth, by means, too, of the *earth-born*: and something extraordinary was to be done to keep her with us sublunaries. And what so effectually as the soothing voice of love, and the attracting offer of matrimony from a man not hated, can fix the attention of the maiden heart aching with uncertainty; and before impatient of the questionable question?

This, in short, was the case—While she was refusing all manner of obligation to me, keeping me at haughty distance, in hopes that her cousin Morden's arrival would soon fix her in a full and absolute independence of me; disgusted likewise at her adorer, for holding himself the reins of his own passions, instead of giving them up to her controul—She writes a letter, urging an answer to a letter before sent, for her apparel, her jewels, and some gold, which she had left behind her; all which was to save her pride from obligation, and to promote the independence her heart was set upon. And what followed but a shocking answer, made still more shocking by the communication of a father's curse upon a daughter deserving only blessings?—A curse upon the curser's heart, and a double one upon the transmitter's, the spiteful, the envious Arabella!

Absent when it came; on my return, I found her recovering from fits, again to fall into stronger fits; and nobody expecting her life; half a dozen messengers dispatched to find me out. Nor wonder at her being so affected; she, whose filial piety gave her dreadful faith in a father's curses; and the curse of this gloomy tyrant extending (to use her own words, when she could speak) *to both worlds*.—O that it had turned, in the moment of it's utterance, to a mortal quinsey, and sticking in his gullet, had choaked the old execrator, as a warning to all such unnatural fathers!

What a miscreant had I been, not to have endeavoured to bring her back, by all the endearments, by all the vows, by all the offers, that I could make her?

I *did* bring her back. More than a father to her; for I have given her a life her unnatural father had well-nigh taken away: shall I not cherish the fruits of my own benefaction? I was earnest in my vows to marry; and my ardour to urge the present time was a *real* ardour. But extreme dejection, with a mingled delicacy, that in her dying moments I doubt not she will preserve, have caused her to refuse me the *time*, though not the solemnity; for she has told me, that now she must be wholly in my protection, [*being destitute of every other!*]—More indebted still, thy friend, as thou seest, to her cruel relations, than to herself, for her favour!

She has written to Miss Howe an account of their barbarity; but *has not acquainted her, how very ill she was.*

Low, very low, she remains; yet, dreading her stupid brother's enterprize, she wants to be in London; where, but for *this* accident, and (wouldst thou have believed it?) for *my persuasions*, seeing her so very ill, she would have been this night; and we shall actually set out on Wednesday morning, if she be not worse.

And now for a few words with thee, on thy heavy preachment of Saturday last.

Thou art apprehensive, that the lady is now truly in danger; and it is a miracle, thou tellest me, if she withstand such an attempter: knowing what we know

know of the sex, thou sayest, thou shouldst dread, wert thou me, to make farther trial, lest thou shouldst succeed. And, in another place, tellest me, that thou pleadest not for the state for any favour thou hast for it.

What an advocate art thou for matrimony!—Thou wert ever an unhappy fellow at argument. Does the trite stuff with which the rest of thy letter abounds, in *favour* of wedlock, strike with the force that this which I have transcribed does *against* it?

Thou takest great pains to convince me, and that from the distresses the lady is reduced to, (chiefly by her friends persecutions and implacableness, I hope thou wilt own, and not from me, as yet) that the proposed trial will not be a fair trial. But let me ask thee, Is not calamity the test of virtue? And wouldst thou not have me value this charming creature upon *proof* of her merits?—Do I not intend to reward her by marriage, if she stand that *proof?*

But why repeat I what I have said before?—Turn back, thou egregious arguer, turn back to my long letter of the 13th*; and thou wilt there find every syllable of what thou hast written either answered or invalidated.

But I am not angry with thee, Jack. I love opposition. As gold is tried by fire, and virtue by temptation; so is sterling wit by opposition. Have I not, before thou settest out as an advocate for my fair-one, often brought thee in, as making objections to my proceedings, for no other reason than to exalt myself by proving thee a man of straw? As Homer raises up many of his champions, and gives them terrible names, only to have them knocked on the head by his heroes.

However, take to thee this one piece of advice—Evermore be sure of being in the right, when thou presumest to sit down to correct thy master.

And another, if thou wilt—Never offer to invalidate the force which a virtuous education ought to have in the sex, by endeavouring to find excuses for *their* frailty from the frailty of ours. For, are we not devils to each other? They tempt us; we tempt them. Because we *men* cannot resist temptation, is that a reason that *women* ought not, when the whole of their education is caution and warning against our attempts? Do not their grandmothers give them one easy rule?—Men are to ask—Women are to deny.

Well, but to return to my principal subject; let me observe, that be my future resolutions what they will as to this lady, the contents of the violent letter she has received, have set me at least a month forward with her. I can now, as I hinted, talk of love and marriage, without controul or restriction; her injunctions no more my terror.

In this sweetly familiar way shall we set out together for London. Mrs. Sorlings's eldest daughter, at my motion, is to attend her in the chaise; while I ride by way of escort: for she is extremely apprehensive of the Singleton plot; and has engaged me to be all patience, if any-thing should happen on the road. But nothing I am sure *will* happen: for, by a letter received just now from Joseph, I understand, that James Harlowe has already laid aside his stupid project. And this by the earnest desire of all those of his friends to whom he had communicated it; who were afraid of the consequences that might attend it. But it is not over with *me* however; although I am not determined at present as to the uses I may make of it.

My beloved tells me, she shall have her cloaths sent her: she hopes also her jewels, and some gold, which she left behind her. But Joseph says, cloaths *only* will be sent. I will not, however, tell her that: on the contrary, I say, there is no doubt, but they will send *all* she wrote for. The greater her disappointment *from them*, the greater must be her dependence *on me*.

But, after all, I hope I shall be enabled to be honest to a merit so transcendent. The devil take thee though for thy opinion given so mal-à-propos, that she *may be* overcome.

'If thou designest to be honest,' methinks thou sayest, 'why should 'not Singleton's plot be over with '*thee*, as it is with her *brother?*'

Because, (if I *must* answer thee) where people are so modestly doubtful of what they are able to do, it is good to leave a loop-hole. And let me add, that when a man's heart is set upon a

* See Letter XIV. Page 333, 337.

point,

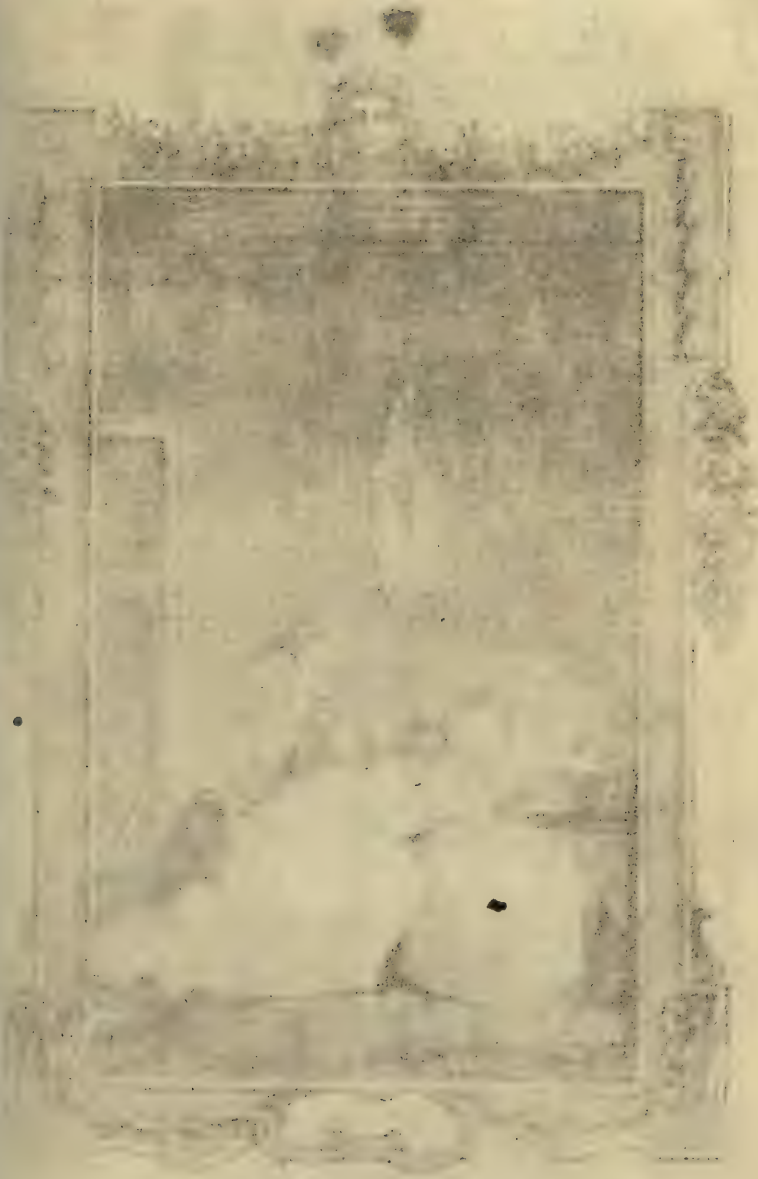

Plate VI.

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point, and any-thing occurs to beat him off, he will find it very difficult, when the ſuſpending reaſon ceaſes, to forbear reſuming it.

LETTER LVII.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

TUESDAY, APRIL 25.

ALL hands at work in preparation for London. What makes my heart beat ſo ſtrong? Why riſes it to my throat, in ſuch half-choaking flutters, when I think of what this removal may do for me? I am hitherto reſolved to be honeſt: and that increaſes my wonder at theſe involuntary commotions. 'Tis a plotting villain of a heart: it ever was; and ever will be, I doubt. Such a joy when any roguery is going forward!—I ſo little it's maſter!—A head likewiſe ſo well turned to anſwer the triangular varlet's impulſes!—No matter. I will have one ſtruggle with thee, old friend; and if I cannot overcome thee now, I never will again attempt to conquer thee.

The dear creature continues extremely low and dejected. Tender bloſſom! How unfit to contend with the rude and ruffling winds of paſſion, and haughty and inſolent controul!—Never till now from under the wing (it is not enough to ſay of indulging, but) of *admiring* parents; the mother's boſom only fit to receive this charming flower!

This was the reflection, that, with mingled compaſſion, and augmented love, aroſe to my mind, when I beheld the charmer repoſing her lovely face upon the boſom of the widow Sorlings, from a recovered fit, as I entered ſoon after ſhe had received her execrable ſiſter's letter. How lovely in her tears!—And as I entered, her lifted-up face ſignificantly beſpeaking my protection, as I thought. And can I be a villain to ſuch an angel!—I hope not—But why, Belford, why, once more, putteſt thou me in mind, that ſhe *may be* overcome? And why is her own reliance on my honour ſo late and ſo reluctantly ſhewn?

But, after all, ſo low, ſo dejected continues ſhe to be, that I am terribly afraid I ſhall have a vapouriſh wife, if I *do* marry. I ſhould then be doubly undone. Not that I ſhall be *much at home with her, perhaps, after the firſt fortnight or ſo.* But when a man has been ranging, like the painful bee, from flower to flower, perhaps for a month together, and the thoughts of home and a wife begin to have their charms with him, to be received by a Niobe, who, like a wounded vine, weeps her vitals away, while ſhe but involuntarily curls about him; how ſhall I be able to bear that?

May Heaven reſtore my charmer to health and ſpirits, I hourly pray—that a man may ſee whether ſhe can love any-body but her father and mother! In *their* power, I am confident, it will be, at any time to make her huſband joyleſs; and that, as I hate them ſo heartily, is a ſhocking thing to reflect upon.—Something *more* than woman, an *angel*, in ſome things; but a *baby* in others: ſo father-ſick! ſo family-fond! what a poor chance ſtands a huſband with ſuch a wife, unleſs, forſooth, they vouchſafe to be reconciled to her, and *continue* reconciled?

It is infinitely better for her and for me, that we ſhould not marry. What a delightful manner of life [O that I could perſuade her to it!] would the life of honour be with ſuch a woman! The fears, the inquietudes, the uneaſy days, the reſtleſs nights; all ariſing from doubts of having diſobliged me! Every abſence dreaded to be an abſence for ever! And then, how amply rewarded, and rewarding, by the rapture-cauſing return! Such a paſſion as this keeps love in a continual fervour; makes it all alive. The happy pair, inſtead of ſitting dozing and nodding at each other in oppoſite chimney-corners in a winter-evening, and over a wintry love, always new to each other, and having always ſomething to ſay.

Thou knoweſt, in my verſes to my Stella, my mind on this occaſion. I will lay thoſe verſes in her way, as if undeſignedly, when we are together at the widow's; that is to ſay, if we do not ſoon go to church by conſent. She will thence ſee what my notions are of wedlock. If ſhe receives them with any ſort of temper, that will be a foundation; and let me alone to build upon it.

Many a girl has been *carried*, who never would have been *attempted*, had ſhe ſhewed a proper reſentment, when her

her ears or her eyes were first invaded. I have tried a young creature by a bad book, a light quotation, or an indecent picture; and if she has borne that, or only blushed, and not been angry; and more especially if she has leered and smiled; that girl have I, and old Satan, put down for our own. O how I could warn these little rogues if I would! Perhaps envy, more than virtue, will put me upon setting up beacons for them, when I grow old and joyless.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON.

If you are in London when I get thither, you will see me soon. My charmer is a little better than she was. Her eyes shew it; and her harmonious voice, hardly audible last time I saw her, now begins to chear my heart once more. But yet she has no love, no sensibility!—There is no addressing her with those *meaning*, yet *innocent* freedoms, (innocent, *at first setting out*, they may be called) which soften others of her sex. The more strange this, as she now acknowledges preferable favour for me; and is highly susceptible of grief. Grief mollifies and enervates. The grieved mind looks round it, silently implores consolation, and loves the soother. Grief is ever an inmate with joy. Though they won't shew themselves at the same window at *one* time; yet they have the whole house in common between them.

LETTER LVIII.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

WEDN. APR. 26.

At last my lucky star has directed us into the desired port, and we are safely landed. Well says Rowe—

'The wise and active conquer difficulties,
'By daring to attempt them. Sloth and folly
'Shiver and shrink at sight of toil and hazard,
'And *make* th' impossibility they *fear*.'

But in the midst of my exultation, something, I know not what to call it, checks my joys, and glooms over my brighter prospects. If it be not conscience, it is wondrously like what I thought so, many, many years ago.

'Surely, Lovelace,' methinks thou sayest, 'thy good motions are not gone 'off already! Surely thou wilt not 'now at last be a villain to this lady!'

I can't tell what to say to it. Why would not the dear creature accept of me, when I so sincerely offered myself to her acceptance? Things already appear with a very different face *now I have got her here*. Already have our mother and her daughters been about me: 'Charming lady! What a com-'plexion! What eyes! What majesty 'in her person!—O Mr. Lovelace, 'you are a happy man!—*You owe us* '*such a lady!*' Then they remind me of my revenge, and of my hatred to her whole family.

Sally was so struck with her, at first sight, that she broke out to me in these lines of Dryden—

'——Fairer to be seen
'Than the fair lily on the flowery green!
'More fresh than May herself in blossoms new!'

I sent to thy lodgings within half an hour after our arrival, to receive thy congratulation upon it: but thou wert at Edgware, it seems.

My beloved, who is charmingly amended, is retired to her constant employment, writing. I must content myself with the same amusement, till she shall be pleased to admit me to her presence; for already have I given to every-one her cue.

And, among the rest, who dost thou think is to be her maid-servant?—Deb. Butler.

'Ah, Lovelace!'

And ah, Belford! It can't be otherwise. But what dost think Deb.'s name is to be!—Why, Dorcas, Dorcas Wykes. And won't it be admirable, if either through fear, fright, or good-liking, we can get my beloved to accept of Dorcas Wykes for a bed-fellow?

In so many ways will it be now in my power to have the dear creature, that I shall not know which of them to chuse!

But here comes the widow, with Dorcas Wykes in her hand; and I am to introduce them both to my fair-one. So!—

* *

So!—The honeſt girl is accepted—Of good parentage: but, through a neglected education, plaguy illiterate—She can neither write, nor read writing. A kinſwoman of Mrs. Sinclair—Could not therefore well be refuſed, the widow in perſon recommending her; and the wench only taken till her Hannah can come. What an advantage has an impoſing or forward nature over a courteous one! So here may ſomething ariſe to lead into correſpondences, and ſo-forth. To be ſure, a perſon need not be *ſo wary, ſo cautious of what ſhe writes, or what ſhe leaves upon her table, or toilette, when her attendant cannot read.*

It would be a miracle, as thou ſayeſt, if this lady can ſave herſelf—And having gone ſo far, how can I recede?—Then my revenge upon the Harlowes!—To have run away with a daughter of theirs, to make her a Lovelace—To make her one of a family ſo ſuperior to her own, what a triumph, as I have heretofore obſerved*, to *them!*—But to run away with her, and to bring her to my lure in the *other* light, what a mortification of their pride! What a gratification of my own!

Then theſe women are continually at me. Theſe women, who, before my whole ſoul and faculties were abſorbed in the love of this ſingle charmer, uſed always to oblige me with the flower and firſt fruits of their garden! Indeed, indeed, my goddeſs ſhould not have choſen this London widow's—But I dare ſay, if I *had*, ſhe would *not*. People who will be dealing in contradiction, ought to pay for it. And to be puniſhed by the conſequences of our own choice, what a moral lies there!—What a deal of good may I not be the occaſion of from a little evil!

Dorcas is a neat creature, both in perſon and dreſs; her countenance not vulgar. And I am in hopes, as I hinted above, that her lady will accept of her for her bedfellow, in a ſtrange houſe, for a week or ſo. But I ſaw ſhe had a diſlike to her at her very firſt appearance: yet I thought the girl behaved very modeſtly—*Over-did* it a little, perhaps—Her lady ſhrunk back, and looked ſhy upon her. The doctrine of ſympathies and antipathies is a ſurprizing doctrine.—But Dorcas will be exceſſively obliging, and win her lady's favour ſoon, I doubt not. I am ſecure in one of the wench's qualities however—She is not to be corrupted. A great point that!—Since a lady and her maid, when heartily of one party, will be too hard for half a ſcore devils.

The dear creature was no leſs ſhy when the widow firſt accoſted her at her alighting. Yet I thought, that honeſt Doleman's letter had prepared her for her maſculine appearance.

And now I mention that letter, why doſt thou not wiſh me joy, Jack?

'Joy of what?'

Why, joy of my nuptials.—Know then, that *ſaid* is *done* with me, when I have a mind to have it ſo; and that we are actually man and wife: only that conſummation has not paſſed—Bound down to the contrary of that, by a ſolemn vow, till a reconciliation with her family take place. The women here are told ſo. They know it, before my beloved knows it; and that, thou wilt ſay, is odd.

But how ſhall I do to make my fair-one keep her temper on the intimation? *Why, is ſhe not here?*—At Mrs. Sinclair's? But if ſhe will hear reaſon, I doubt not to convince her, that ſhe ought to acquieſce.

She will inſiſt, I ſuppoſe, upon my leaving her, and that I ſhall not take up my lodgings under the ſame roof. But circumſtances are changed ſince I firſt made her that promiſe. I have taken all the vacant apartments; and muſt carry this point alſo.

I hope in a while to get her with me to the publick entertainments. She knows nothing of the town, and has ſeen leſs of it's diverſions than ever woman of her taſte, her fortune, her endowments, did ſee. She has indeed a natural politeneſs, which tranſcends all acquirement. The moſt capable of any one I ever knew, of judging what an *hundred* things are, by ſeeing *one* of a like nature. Indeed ſhe took ſo much pleaſure in her own choſen amuſements till perſecuted out of them, that ſhe had neither leiſure nor inclination for the town-diverſions.

Theſe diverſions will amuſe. And the deuce is in it, if a little ſuſceptibility will not put forth, now ſhe receives

* See Page 332.

my addreſs; eſpecially if I can manage it ſo, as to be allowed to live under *one* roof with her. What though the ſenſibility be at firſt faint and reluctant, like the appearance of an early ſpring-flower in froſty weather, which ſeems afraid of being nipt by an eaſterly blaſt? That will be enough for me.

I hinted to thee in a former*, that I had provided books for the lady's indoor amuſement. Sally and Polly are readers. My beloved's light cloſet was their library. And ſeveral pieces of devotion have been put in, bought on purpoſe, at *ſecond-hand*.

I was always for forming a judgment of the reading part of the ſex by their books. The obſervations I have made on this occaſion have been of great uſe to me, as well in England as out of it. The ſagacious lady may poſſibly be as curious in this point as her Lovelace.

So much for the preſent. Thou ſeeſt, that I have a great deal of buſineſs before me. Yet I will write again ſoon.

Mr. Lovelace ſends another letter with this; in which he takes notice of young Mrs. Sorlings's ſetting out with them, and leaving them at Barnet: but as it's contents are nearly the ſame with thoſe in the lady's next letter, it is omitted.

LETTER LIX.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON, APRIL 26.

AT length, my deareſt Miſs Howe, I am in London, and in my new lodgings. They are neatly furniſhed, and the ſituation, for the town, is pleaſant.

But, I think, you muſt not aſk me, how I like the old gentlewoman. Yet ſhe ſeems courteous and obliging. Her kinſwomen juſt appeared to welcome me at my alighting. They ſeem to be genteel young women. But more of their aunt and of them, as I ſhall ſee more.

Miſs Sorlings has an uncle at Barnet, whom ſhe found ſo very ill, that her uneaſineſs on that account (having large expectations from him) made me comply with her deſire to ſtay with him. Yet I wiſhed, as her uncle did not expect her, that ſhe would ſee me ſettled in London; and Mr. Lovelace was ſtill more earneſt that ſhe would, offering to ſend her back again in a day or two, and urging, that her uncle's malady threatened not a ſudden change. But leaving the matter to *her choice*, after ſhe knew what *would have been mine*, ſhe made me not the expected compliment. Mr. Lovelace, however, made her a handſome preſent at parting.

His genteel ſpirit on all occaſions makes me often wiſh him more conſiſtent.

As ſoon as I arrived, I took poſſeſſion of my apartment. I ſhall make good uſe of the light cloſet in it, if I ſtay here any time.

One of his attendants returns in the morning to The Lawn; and I made writing to you by him, an excuſe for my retiring.

And now give me leave to chide you, my deareſt friend, for your raſh, and I hope revocable reſolution, not to make Mr. Hickman the happieſt man in the world, while my happineſs is in ſuſpenſe. Suppoſe I were to be unhappy, what, my dear, would this reſolution of yours avail me? Marriage is the higheſt ſtate of friendſhip: if happy, it leſſens our cares by dividing them, at the ſame time that it doubles our pleaſures by a mutual participation. Why, my dear, if you love me, will you not rather give *another* friend to one who has *not two* that ſhe is ſure of?—Had you married on your mother's laſt birth-day, as ſhe would have had you, I ſhould not, I dare ſay, have wanted a refuge, that would have ſaved me many mortifications, and much diſgrace.

* *

HERE I was broke in upon by Mr. Lovelace; introducing the widow leading in a kinſwoman of hers to attend me, if I approved of her, till my Hannah ſhould come, or till I had provided myſelf with ſome other ſervant. The widow gave her many good qualities; but ſaid, that ſhe had one great defect; which was, that ſhe could not write, nor read writing; that part of her education having been neglected when ſhe was young: but for diſcretion, fidelity,

* See Page 379.

obligingneſs,

obligingneſs, ſhe was not to be out-done by any-body. She commended her likewiſe for her ſkill at the needle.

As for *her defect*, I can eaſily forgive that. She is very likely and genteel; too genteel indeed, I think, for a ſervant. But, what I like leaſt of all in her, ſhe has a ſtrange ſly eye. I never ſaw ſuch an eye—Half-confident, I think. But indeed Mrs. Sinclair herſelf (for that is the widow's name) has an odd winking eye; and her reſpectfulneſs ſeems too much ſtudied, methinks, for the London eaſe and freedom. But people can't help their looks, you know; and after all, ſhe is extremely civil and obliging. And as for the young woman, (Dorcas is her name) ſhe will not be long with me.

I accepted her: how could I do otherwiſe, (if I had had a mind to make objections, which in my preſent ſituation I had not) her aunt preſent, and the young woman alſo preſent; and Mr. Lovelace officious in his introducing them, to oblige me? But, upon their leaving me, I told *him*, (who ſeemed inclinable to begin a converſation with me) that I deſired that this apartment might be conſidered as my retirement: that when I ſaw him, it might be in the dining-room; (which is up a few ſtairs; for this back-houſe being once two, the rooms do not all of them very conveniently communicate with each other) and that I might be as little broken in upon as poſſible, when I am here. He withdrew very reſpectfully to the door; but there ſtopt; and aſked for my company *then* in the dining-room. If he were about ſetting out for other lodgings, I would go with him now, I told him: but if he did not juſt then go, I would firſt finiſh my letter to Miſs Howe.

I ſee he has no mind to leave me, if he can help it. My brother's ſcheme may give him a pretence to try to engage me to diſpenſe with his promiſe. But if I *now do*, I muſt acquit him of it entirely.

My approbation of his tender behaviour in the midſt of my grief has given him a right, as he ſeems to think, of addreſſing me with all the freedom of an approved lover. I ſee by this man, that when once a woman embarks with this ſex, there is no receding. One conceſſion is but the prelude to another with them. He has been ever ſince Sunday laſt continually complaining of the diſtance I keep him at; and thinks himſelf entitled now, to call in queſtion my value for him; ſtrengthening his doubts by my former declared readineſs to give him up to a reconciliation with my friends—And yet has himſelf fallen off from that *obſequious tenderneſs*, if I may couple the words, which drew from me the conceſſions he builds upon.

While we were talking at the door, my new ſervant came up, with an invitation to us both to tea. I ſaid, *he* might accept of it, if he pleaſed; but I muſt purſue my writing: and not chuſing either tea or ſupper, I deſired him to make my excuſes below, as to both; and inform them of my choice to be retired as much as poſſible. Yet to promiſe for me my attendance on the widow and her nieces at breakfaſt in the morning.

He objected particularity in the eye of ſtrangers, as to avoiding ſupper.

'You know,' ſaid I, 'and you can 'tell them, that I ſeldom eat ſuppers. 'My ſpirits are low. You muſt ne-'ver urge me againſt a declared choice. 'Pray, Mr. Lovelace, inform them 'of all my particularities. If they 'are obliging, they will allow for 'them. I come not hither to make 'new acquaintance.'

I have turned over the books I found in my cloſet; and am not a little pleaſed with them; and think the better of the people of the houſe for their ſakes.

Stanhope's Goſpels; Sharp's, Tillotſon's, and South's Sermons; Nelſon's Feaſts and Faſts; a Sacramental piece of the Biſhop of Man, and another of Dr. Gauden, Biſhop of Exeter; and Inett's Devotions; are among the devout books: and among thoſe of a lighter turn, the following not ill choſen ones. A Telemachus in French, another in Engliſh; Steele's, Rowe's, and Shakeſpeare's plays; that genteel comedy of Mr. Cibber, The Careleſs Huſband, and others of the ſame author; Dryden's Miſcellanies; the Tatlers, Spectators, and Guardians; Pope's, and Swift's, and Addiſon's works.

In the blank leaves of the Nelſon and Biſhop Gauden, is Mrs. Sinclair's name; and in thoſe of moſt of the others, either Sarah Martin, or Mary Horton, the names of the two nieces.

* *

I AM exceedingly out of humour with Mr. Lovelace: and have great reason to be so. As you will allow, when you have read the conversation I am going to give you an account of; for he would not let me rest till I gave him my company in the dining-room.

He began with letting me know, that he had been out to enquire after the character of the widow, which was the more necessary, he said, as he supposed that I would *expect his frequent absence*.

I *did*, I said: and that he would not think of taking up his lodging in the same house with me. 'But what,' said I, 'is the result of your enquiry?'

Why, indeed, the widow's character was, in the main, what he liked well enough. But as it was Miss Howe's opinion, as I had told him, that my brother had not given over his scheme; as the widow lived by letting lodgings; and had others to lett in the same part of the house, which might be taken by an enemy; he knew no better way, than for him to take them all, as it could not be for a long time—*unless I would think of removing to others*.

So far was well enough: but as it was easy for me to see, that he spoke the slighter of the widow, in order to have a pretence to lodge here himself, I asked him his intention in that respect. And he frankly owned, that if I chose to stay here, he could not, as matters stood, think of leaving me for six hours together; and he had prepared the widow to expect, that we should be here but for a few days—only till we could fix ourselves in a house suitable to our condition; and this, that I might be under the less embarrass, if I pleased to remove.

'Fix *our*-selves in a house, and *we* and *our*, Mr. Lovelace—Pray, in what light—'

He interrupted me—'Why, my dearest life, if you will hear me with patience—Yet I am half-afraid, that I have been too forward, as I have not consulted you upon it—But as my friends in town, according to what Mr. Doleman has written, in the letter you have seen, conclude us to be married—'

'Surely, Sir, you have not presumed—'

'Hear me out, dearest creature—You have received with favour my addresses—You have made me hope for the honour of your consenting hand: yet, by declining my most fervent tender of myself to you at Mrs. Sorlings's, have given me apprehensions of delay: I would not for the world be thought so ungenerous a wretch, now you have honoured me with your confidence, *as to wish to precipitate you*: yet your brother's schemes are not given up. Singleton, I am afraid, is actually in town; his vessel lies at Rotherhith—Your brother is absent from Harlowe Place; indeed not with Singleton yet, as I can hear. If you are *known* to be mine, or if you are but *thought* to be so, there will probably be an end of your brother's contrivances. The widow's character may be as worthy *as it is said to be*. But the worthier she is, the more danger, if your brother's agent should find us out; since she may be persuaded, that she ought in conscience to take a parent's part, against a child who stands in opposition to them. But if she believes us married, her good character will stand us in stead, and she will be of our party.—Then I have taken care to give her a reason why two apartments are requisite for us, at the hour of retirement.'

I perfectly raved at him. I would have flung from him in resentment; but he would not let me: and what could I do? Whither go, the evening advanced?

'I am astonished at you?' said I.—'If you are a man of honour, what need of all this strange obliquity? You delight in crooked ways—Let me know, since I *must* stay in your company, (for he held my hand) let me know all you have said to the people below.—Indeed, indeed, Mr. Lovelace, you are a very unaccountable man.'

'My dearest creature, need I to have mentioned any-thing of this? And could I not have taken up my lodgings in this house unknown to you, if I had not intended to make you the judge of all my proceedings? But *this* is what I have told the widow before her kinswomen, and before your new servant—That indeed we were privately married at Hertford; but that you had preliminarily bound

'me

'me under a solemn vow, which I am 'most religiously resolved to keep, to 'be contented with separate apart-'ments, and even not to lodge under 'the same roof, till a certain reconci-'liation shall take place, which is of 'high consequence to both. And fur-'ther, that I might convince you of 'the purity of my intentions, and that 'my whole view in this was to prevent 'mischief, I have acquainted them, 'that I have solemnly promised to be-'have to you before every-body, as if 'we were only betrothed, and not mar-'ried; not even offering to take any of 'those innocent freedoms which are not 'refused in the most punctilious loves.'

And then he solemnly vowed to me the strictest observance of the same respectful behaviour to me.

I said, that I was not by any means satisfied with the tale he had told, nor with the necessity he wanted to lay me under, of appearing what I was not: that every step he took was a wry one, a needless wry one: and since he thought it necessary to tell the people below anything about me, I insisted, that he should unsay all he had said, and tell them the truth.

What he had told them, he said, was with so many circumstances, that he could sooner die than contradict it. And still he insisted upon the propriety of appearing to be married, for the reasons he had given before.—'And, dear-'est creature,' said he, 'why this high 'displeasure with me upon so well-in-'tended an expedient? You know, that 'I cannot wish to shun your brother, 'or his Singleton, but upon your ac-'count. The first step I would take, 'if left to myself, would be to find 'them out. *I have always acted in 'this manner, when any-body has pre-'sumed to give out threatenings against 'me.*

'Tis true, I would have consulted 'you first, and had your leave. But 'since you dislike what I have said, let 'me implore you, dearest Madam, to 'give the only proper sanction to it, by 'naming an early day. Would to 'Heaven that were to be to-morrow! '—For God's sake, let it be to-mor-'row! But if not,' [Was it his busi-ness, my dear, before I spoke, (yet he seemed to be afraid of me) to say, *if not?*] 'let me beseech you, Madam, 'if my behaviour shall not be to your 'dislike, that you will not to-morrow, 'at breakfast-time, discredit what I 'have told them. The moment I give 'you cause to think, that I take any 'advantage of your concession, that 'moment revoke it, and expose me, as 'I shall deserve.—And once more, let 'me remind you, that I have no view 'either to serve or save myself by this 'expedient. It is only to prevent a 'probable mischief, for your own 'mind's sake; and for the sake of those 'who deserve not the least considera-'tion from me.'

What could I say? What could I do?—I verily think, that had he urged me again, in a *proper manner*, I should have consented (little satisfied as I am with him) to give him a meeting to-morrow morning at a more solemn place than in the parlour below.

But this I resolve, that he shall not have my consent to stay a night under this roof. He has now given me a stronger reason for this determination than I had before.

* *

Alas! my dear, how vain a thing to say, what we will or what we will not do, when we have put ourselves into the power of this sex!—He went down to the people below, on my desiring to be left to myself; and staid till their supper was just ready; and then, desiring a moment's *audience*, as he called it, he besought my leave to stay that one night, promising to set out either for Lord M.'s, or for Edgware to his friend Belford's, in the morning, after breakfast. But if I were against it, he said, he would not stay supper; and would attend me about eight next day—Yet he added, that my denial would have a very particular appearance to the people below, from what he had told them; and the more, as he had actually agreed for all the vacant apartments (indeed only for a month) for the reason he had before hinted at: but I need not stay here two days, if, upon conversing with the widow and her nieces in the morning, I should have any dislike to them.

I thought, notwithstanding my resolution above-mentioned, that it would seem too punctilious to deny him, under the circumstances he had mentioned:—having, besides, no reason to think he would obey me; for he looked, as if he were determined to debate the matter with

with me. And now as I see no likelihood of a reconciliation with my friends, and as I have actually received his addresses, I thought I would not quarrel with him, if I could help it, especially as he asked to stay but for one night, and could have done so without my knowing it; and you being of opinion, that the proud wretch, distrusting his own merits with me, or at least my regard for him, will probably bring me to some concessions in his favour—For all these reasons, I thought proper to yield *this* point: yet I was so vexed with him on the *other*, that it was impossible for me to comply with that grace which a concession should be made with, or not made at all.

'This was what I said—' What you 'will do, you *must* do, I think. You 'are very ready to promise; very ready 'to depart from your promise. You 'say, however, that you will set out 'to-morrow for the country. You 'know how ill I have been. I am not 'well enough now to debate with you 'upon your encroaching ways. I am 'utterly dissatisfied with the tale you 'have told below. Nor will I pro-'mise to appear to the people of the 'house to-morrow what I am not.'

He withdrew in the most respectful manner, beseeching me only to favour him with such a meeting in the morning, as might not make the widow and her nieces think he had given me reason to be offended with him.

I retired to my own apartment, and Dorcas came to me soon after to take my commands. I told her, that I required very little attendance, and always dressed and undressed myself.

She seemed concerned, as if she thought I had repulsed her; and said, It should be her whole study to oblige me.

I told her, that I was not difficult to be pleased: and should let her know from time to time what assistance I should expect from her. But for that night I had no occasion for her further attendance.

She is not only genteel, but is well-bred, and well-spoken.—She must have had what is generally thought to be the polite part of education: but it is strange, that fathers and mothers should make so light, as they generally do, of that preferable part in girls, which would improve their minds, and give a grace to all the rest.

As soon as she was gone, I inspected the doors, the windows, the wainscot, the dark closet as well as the light one; and finding very good fastenings to the door, and to all the windows, I again had recourse to my pen.

* *

Mrs. Sinclair is just now gone from me. Dorcas, she told me, had acquainted her, that I had dismissed her for the night. She came to ask me how I liked my apartment, and to wish me good rest. She expressed her concern, that they could not have my company at supper. Mr. Lovelace, she said, had informed them of my love of retirement. She assured me, that I should not be broken in upon. She highly extolled *him*, and gave *me* a share in the praise, as to person. But was sorry, she said, that she was likely to lose us so soon as Mr. Lovelace talked of.

I answered her with suitable civility; and she withdrew with great tokens of respect. With greater, I think, than should be from distance of years, as she was the wife of a gentleman; and as the appearance of every-thing about her, as well house as dress, carries the marks of such good circumstances, as require not abasement.

If, my dear, you *will* write against prohibition, be pleased to direct, '*To 'Miss Lætitia Beaumont; to be left till 'called for, at Mr. Wilson's in Pall 'Mall.*'

Mr. Lovelace proposed this direction to me, not *knowing* of your desire that your letters should pass by a third hand. As his motive for it was, that my brother might not trace out where we are, I am glad, as well from this instance as from others, that he seems to think he has done mischief enough already.

Do you know how my poor Hannah does?

Mr. Lovelace is so full of his contrivances and expedients, that I think it may not be amiss to desire you to look carefully to the seals of my letters, as I shall to those of yours. If I find him base in this particular, I shall think him capable of any evil; and will fly him as my worst enemy.

LETTER

LETTER LX.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

WITH HER TWO LAST LETTERS, N° LIV. LV. INCLOSED.

THURSDAY NIGHT, APRIL 27.

I Have yours; juſt brought me. Mr. Hickman has helped me to a lucky expedient, which, with the aſſiſtance of the poſt, will enable me to correſpond with you every day. An honeſt higler [Simon Collins his name] by whom I ſhall ſend this, and the two incloſed, (now I have your direction whither) goes to town conſtantly on Mondays, Wedneſdays and Fridays; and can bring back to me from Mr. Wilſon's what you ſhall have cauſed to be left for me.

I congratulate you on your arrival in town, ſo much amended in ſpirits. I muſt be brief. I hope you'll have no cauſe to repent returning my Norris. It is forthcoming on demand.

I am ſorry your Hannah can't be with you. She is very ill ſtill; but not dangerouſly.

I long for your account of the women you are with. If they are not right people, you will find them out in one breakfaſting.

I know not what to write upon his reporting to them that you are actually married. His reaſons for it are plauſible. But he delights in odd expedients and inventions.

Whether you like the people or not, do not, by your noble ſincerity and plain-dealing, make yourſelf enemies. You are in the *world* now, you know.

I am glad you had thoughts of taking him at his offer; if he had re-urged it. I wonder he did not. But if he do not ſoon, and in ſuch a way as you *can* accept of it, don't think of ſtaying with him.

Depend upon it, my dear, he will not leave you, either night or day, if he can help it, now he has got footing.

I ſhould have abhorred him for his report of your marriage, had he not made it with ſuch circumſtances as leave it ſtill in your power to keep him at diſtance. If once he offer at the *leaſt* familiarity—But this is needleſs to ſay to you, He can have, I think, no other deſign but what he profeſſes; becauſe he muſt needs think, that his report of being married to you muſt encreaſe your vigilance.

You may depend upon my looking narrowly into the ſealings of your letters. If, as you ſay, he be baſe in that point, he will be ſo in every-thing. But to a perſon of your merit, of your fortune, of your virtue, he cannot be baſe. The man is no fool. It is his intereſt, as well with regard to his expectations from his own friends, as from you, to be honeſt. Would to Heaven, however, that you were *really* married! This is now the predominant wiſh of *your*

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER LXI.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

THURSDAY MORNING, EIGHT O'CLOCK.

I Am more and more diſpleaſed with Mr. Lovelace, on reflection, for his boldneſs in hoping to make me, though but *paſſively*, as I may ſay, teſtify to his great untruth. And I ſhall like him ſtill leſs for it, if his view in it does not come out to be *the hope of accelerating my reſolution in his favour*, by the difficulty it will lay me under as to my behaviour to him. He has ſent me his compliments by Dorcas, with a requeſt that I will permit him to attend me in the dining-room—perhaps, that he may gueſs from thence, whether I will meet him in good humour, or not: but I have anſwered, that as I ſhall ſee him at breakfaſt-time I deſired to be excuſed.

TEN O'CLOCK.

I TRIED to adjuſt my countenance, before I went down, to an eaſier air than I had a heart, and was received with the higheſt tokens of reſpect by the widow, and her two nieces: agreeable young women enough in their perſons; but they ſeemed to put on an air of reſerve; while Mr. Lovelace was eaſy and free to all, as if he were of long acquaintance with them: gracefully enough, I cannot but ſay; an advantage which travelled gentlemen have over other people.

The widow, in the converſation we had

had after breakfaſt, gave us an account of the military merit of the colonel her huſband, and, upon this occaſion, put her handkerchief to her eyes twice or thrice. I hope for the ſake of her ſincerity, ſhe wetted it, becauſe ſhe would be *thought* to have done ſo; but I ſaw not that ſhe did. She wiſhed that I might never know the loſs of a huſband ſo dear to me, as her beloved colonel was to her: and ſhe again put the handkerchief to her eyes.

It muſt, no doubt, be a moſt affecting thing to be ſeparated from a good huſband, and to be left in difficult circumſtances beſides, and that not by *his* fault, and expoſed to the inſults of the baſe and ungrateful, as ſhe repreſented her caſe to be at his death. This moved me a good deal in her favour.

You know, my dear, that I have an open and free heart; and naturally have as open and free a countenance; at leaſt my complimenters have told me ſo. At once, where I like, I mingle minds without reſerve, encouraging reciprocal freedoms, and am forward to diſſipate diffidences. But with theſe two nieces of the widow I never can be intimate —I don't know why.

Only, that circumſtances, and what paſſed in converſation, encouraged not the notion, or I ſhould have been apt to think, that the young ladies and Mr. Lovelace were of longer acquaintance than of yeſterday. For he, by ſtealth, as it were, caſt glances ſometimes at them, which they returned; and, on my ocular notice, their eyes fell, as I may ſay, under my eye, as if they could not ſtand examination.

The widow directed all her talk to me, as to Mrs. Lovelace; and I, with a very ill grace, bore it. And once ſhe expreſſed, more forwardly than I thanked her for, her wonder that any vow, any conſideration, however weighty, could have force enough with ſo charming a couple, as ſhe called him and me, to make us keep ſeparate beds.

Their eyes, upon this hint, had the advantage of mine. Yet was I not conſcious of guilt. How know I then, upon recollection, that my cenſures upon theirs are not too raſh? There are, no doubt, many truly modeſt perſons, (putting myſelf out of the queſtion) who, by bluſhes at an injurious charge, have been ſuſpected, by thoſe who cannot diſtinguiſh between the confuſion which guilt will be attended with, and the noble conſciouſneſs that overſpreads the face of a fine ſpirit, to be thought but capable of an imputed evil.

The great Roman, as we read, who took his ſurname from one part in three (the fourth not then diſcovered) of the world he had triumphed over, being charged with a mean crime to his ſoldiery, choſe rather to ſuffer exile (the puniſhment due to it, had he been found guilty) than to have it ſaid, that Scipio was queſtioned in publick, on ſo ſcandalous a charge. And think you, my dear, that Scipio did not bluſh with indignation, when the charge was firſt communicated to him?

Mr. Lovelace, when the widow expreſſed her forward wonder, looked ſly and leering, as if to obſerve how I took it: and ſaid, they might take notice that his regard for my will and pleaſure (calling me his dear creature) had greater force upon him than the oath by which he had bound himſelf.

Rebuking both him and the widow, I ſaid, it was ſtrange to me to hear an oath or vow ſo lightly treated, as to have it thought but of ſecond conſideration, whatever were the firſt.

The obſervation was juſt, Miſs Martin ſaid; for that nothing could excuſe the breaking of a ſolemn vow, be the occaſion of making it what it would.

I aſked after the neareſt church; for I have been too long a ſtranger to the ſacred worſhip. They named St. James's, St. Anne's, and another in Bloomſbury; and the two nieces ſaid, they oftenеſt went to St. James's church, becauſe of the good company, as well as for the excellent preaching.

Mr. Lovelace ſaid, the Royal Chapel was the place he oftenеſt went to, when in town. Poor man! little did I expect to hear he went to any place of devotion. I aſked, if the preſence of the viſible king of, comparatively, but a ſmall territory, did not take off, too generally, the requiſite attention to the ſervice of the inviſible King and Maker of a thouſand worlds?

He believed this might be ſo with ſuch as came for curioſity, when the royal family were preſent. But otherwiſe, he had ſeen as many contrite faces at the Royal Chapel, as any-where elſe: 'And why not? Since the people 'about court have as deep ſcores to 'wipe off, as any people whatſoever.'

He

He ſpoke this with ſo much levity, that I could not help ſaying, that nobody queſtioned but he knew how to chuſe his company.

'Your ſervant, my dear,' bowing, were his words; and turning to them, 'You will obſerve upon numberleſs occaſions, ladies, as we are further acquainted, that my beloved never ſpares me upon theſe topicks. But I admire her as much in her reproofs, as I am fond of her approbation.'

Miſs Horton ſaid, There was a time for every-thing. She could not but ſay, that ſhe thought innocent mirth was mighty becoming in young people.

'Very true,' joined in Miſs Martin. 'And Shakeſpeare ſays well, *That youth is the ſpring of life, the bloom of gaudy years*.' [With a theatrical air ſhe ſpoke it:] and, for her part, ſhe could not but admire in my ſpouſe, that charming vivacity which ſo well ſuited his time of life.

Mr. Lovelace bowed. The man is fond of praiſe. More fond of it, I doubt, than of deſerving it. Yet this ſort of praiſe he *does* deſerve. He has, you know, an eaſy free manner, and no bad voice: and this praiſe ſo expanded his gay heart, that he ſung the following lines from Congreve, as he told us they were—

'Youth does a thouſand pleaſures bring,
'Which from decrepit age will fly;
'Sweets that wanton in the boſom of the ſpring,
'In winter's cold embraces die.'

And this for a compliment, as he ſaid, to the two nieces. Nor was it thrown away upon them. They encored it; and his compliance fixed them in my memory.

We had ſome talk about meals; and the widow very civilly offered to conform to any rules I would ſet her. I told her how eaſily I was pleaſed, and how much I choſe to dine by myſelf, and that from a plate ſent me from any ſingle diſh. But I will not trouble you, my dear, with ſuch particulars.

They thought me very ſingular; and with reaſon: but as I liked them not ſo *very* well as to forego my own choice in compliment to them, I was the leſs concerned for what they thought.—And ſtill the leſs, as Mr. Lovelace had put me very much out of humour with him.

They, however, cautioned me againſt melancholy. I ſaid, I ſhould be a very unhappy creature, if I could not bear my own company.

Mr. Lovelace ſaid, That he muſt let the ladies into my ſtory; and then they would know how to allow for my ways. 'But, *my dear, as you love me*,' ſaid the confident wretch, 'give as little 'way to melancholy as poſſible. No-'thing but the ſweetneſs of your tem-'per, and your high notions of a duty 'that never can be deſerved where you 'place it, can make you ſo uneaſy as 'you are.—Be not angry, *my dear 'love*, for ſaying ſo,' [ſeeing me frown, I ſuppoſe:] and ſnatched my hand, and kiſſed it.—I left him with them; and retired to my cloſet and my pen.

Juſt as I have written thus far, I am interrupted by a meſſage from him, that he is ſetting out on a journey, and deſires to take my commands.—So here I will leave off, to give him a meeting in the dining-room.

I WAS not diſpleaſed to ſee him in his riding-dreſs.

He ſeemed deſirous to know how I liked the gentlewomen below. I told him, that although I did not think them *very* exceptionable; yet as I wanted not, in my preſent ſituation, new acquaintance, I ſhould not be fond of cultivating theirs.

He urged me ſtill further on this head.

I could not ſay, I told him, that I greatly liked either of the young gentlewomen, any more than their aunt: and that were my ſituation ever ſo happy, they had much too gay a turn for me.

He did not wonder, he ſaid, to hear me ſay ſo. He knew not any of the ſex who had been accuſtomed to ſhew themſelves at the town-diverſions and amuſements, that would appear tolerable to me. 'Silences and *bluſhes*, Madam, 'are now no graces with our fine la-'dies in town. Hardened by frequent 'publick appearances, they would be 'as much aſhamed to be found guilty 'of theſe weakneſſes, as men.'

'Do you defend theſe two gentle-'women, Sir, by reflections upon half 'the ſex? But you muſt ſecond me, 'Mr. Lovelace, (and yet I am not fond 'of being thought particular) in my 'deſire of breakfaſting and ſupping '(when I *do* ſup) by myſelf.'

If I would have it ſo, to be ſure it ſhould be ſo. The people of the houſe were not of conſequence enough to be apologized to, in any point where my pleaſure was concerned. And if I ſhould diſlike them ſtill more on further knowledge of them, he hoped I would think of *ſome other lodgings*.

He expreſſed a good deal of regret at leaving me, declaring, that it was abſolutely in obedience to my commands: but that he could not have conſented to go, while my brother's ſchemes were on foot, if I had not done him the credit of my countenance in the report he had made that we were married; which, he ſaid, had bound all the family to his intereſt, ſo that he could leave me with the greater ſecurity and ſatisfaction.

He hoped, he ſaid, that on his *return* I would name his happy day; and the rather, as I might be convinced, by my brother's projects, that no reconciliation was to be expected.

I told him, that perhaps I might write one letter to my uncle Harlowe. He once loved me. I ſhould be eaſier when I had made one direct application. I might poſſibly propoſe ſuch terms, in relation to my grandfather's eſtate, as might procure me their attention; and I hoped he would be long enough abſent to give me time to write to him, and receive an anſwer from him.

That, he muſt beg my pardon, he could not promiſe. He would inform himſelf of Singleton's and my brother's motions; and if on his return he found no reaſon for apprehenſion, he would go directly for Berks, and endeavour to bring up with him his couſin Charlotte, who, he hoped, would induce me to give him an earlier day, than at preſent I *ſeemed to think of*.—I *ſeemed to think of*, my dear! Very acquieſcent, as I ſhould imagine!

I told him, that I ſhould take that young lady's company for a great favour.

I was the more pleaſed with this motion, as it came from himſelf, and with no ill grace.

He earneſtly preſſed me to accept of a Bank note: but I declined it. And then he offered me his ſervant William for my attendant in his abſence; who, he ſaid, might be diſpatched to him, if anything extraordinary fell out. I conſented to that.

He took his leave of me in the moſt reſpectful manner, only kiſſing my hand. He left the Bank note, unobſerved by me, upon the table. You may be ſure, I ſhall give it him back at his return.

I am in a much better humour with him than I was.

Where doubts of any perſon are removed, a mind not ungenerous is willing, by way of amends for having conceived thoſe doubts, to conſtrue everything that happens *capable* of a good conſtruction, in that perſon's favour. Particularly, I cannot but be pleaſed to obſerve, that although he ſpeaks of the ladies of his family with the freedom of relationſhip, yet it is always with tenderneſs. And from a man's kindneſs to his relations of the ſex, a woman has ſome reaſon to expect his good behaviour to herſelf, when married, if ſhe be willing to deſerve it from him.

And thus, my dear, am I brought to ſit down ſatisfied with this man, where I find room to infer that he is not by nature a ſavage. But how could a creature, who (treating herſelf unpolitely) gave a man an opportunity to run away with her, expect to be treated by that man with a very high degree of politeneſs?

'But why, now, when fairer proſpects 'ſeem to open, why theſe melancholy 'reflections?' will my beloved friend aſk of her Clariſſa.

Why? Can you aſk why, my deareſt Miſs Howe, of a creature, who, in the world's eye, has enrolled her name among the giddy and the inconſiderate; who labours under a parent's curſe, and the cruel uncertainties, which muſt ariſe from reflecting, that, equally againſt duty and principle, ſhe has thrown herſelf into the power of a man, and that man an immoral one?—Muſt not the ſenſe ſhe has of her inconſideration darken her moſt hopeful proſpects? Muſt it not even riſe *ſtrongeſt* upon a thoughtful mind, when her hopes are the faireſt? Even her pleaſures, were the man to prove better than ſhe expects, coming to her with an abatement, like that which perſons who are in poſſeſſion of ill-gotten wealth muſt then moſt poignantly experience, (if they have reflecting and unſeared minds) when, all their wiſhes anſwered, (if the wiſhes of ſuch perſons can ever be wholly anſwered) they ſit down in hopes to *enjoy* what they have unjuſtly obtained, and

and find their own reflections their greatest torment.

May you, my dear friend, be always happy in your reflections, prays *your ever-affectionate*

CL. HARLOWE.

Mr. Lovelace, in his next letter, triumphs on his having carried his two great points of making the lady yield to pass for his wife to the people of the house, and to his taking up his lodgings in it, though but for one night. He is now, *he says*, in a fair way, and doubts not but that he shall soon prevail, if not by persuasion, by surprize. *Yet he pretends to have some little remorse, and* censures himself as acting the part of the grand tempter. But having succeeded thus far, he cannot, *he says*, forbear trying, according to the resolution he had before made, whether he cannot go farther.

He gives the particulars of their debates on the above-mentioned subjects, to the same effect as in the lady's last letters.

It will by this time be seen, that his whole merit, with regard to this lady, lies in doing justice to her excellences both of mind and person, though to his own condemnation. Thus he begins his succeeding letter:

'And now, Belford, will I give thee 'an account of our first breakfast-con-'versation.

'All sweetly serene and easy was the 'lovely brow and charming aspect of 'my goddess, on her descending among 'us; commanding reverence from every 'eye; a curtsey from every knee; and 'silence, awful silence, from every qui-'vering lip: while she, armed with con-'scious worthiness and superiority, 'looked and behaved, as an empress 'would look and behave among her 'vassals; yet with a freedom from pride 'and haughtiness, as if born to dignity, 'and to a behaviour habitually gra-'cious.'

He takes notice of the jealousy, pride, and vanity, of Sally Martin and Polly Horton, on his respectful behaviour to the lady: *creatures who, brought up too high for their fortunes, and to a taste of pleasure, and the publick diversions, had fallen an easy prey to his seducing arts,* (as will be seen in the *conclusion* of this work:) *and who, as he observes,* had not yet got over that distinction in their love, which makes a woman prefer one man to another.

'How difficult is it, *says he*, 'to make a 'woman subscribe to a preference against 'herself, though ever so visible; especially 'where love is concerned! This violent, 'this partial little devil, Sally, has the 'insolence to compare herself with my 'angel—yet owns her to be an angel. "I "charge you, Mr. Lovelace," says she, "shew none of your extravagant acts "of kindness before me to this sullen, "this gloomy beauty—I cannot bear "it." Then was I reminded of her first 'sacrifice.

'What a rout do these women make 'about nothing at all! Were it not for 'what the *learned bishop*, in his letter 'from Italy, calls the Entanglements of 'Amour, and *I* the Delicacies of In-'trigue, what is there, Belford, in all 'they can do for us?

'How do these creatures endeavour to 'stimulate me! A fallen woman is a 'worse devil than even a profligate man. 'The former is incapable of remorse: 'that am not I—Nor ever shall they pre-'vail upon me, though aided by all the 'powers of darkness, to treat this admi-'rable creature with indignity.—So far, 'I mean, as indignity can be separated 'from the trials which will prove her to 'be either woman or angel.

'Yet with them, I am a craven. I 'might have had her before now, if I 'would. If I would treat her as flesh 'and blood, I should find her such. They 'thought I knew, if any man living did, 'that if a man made a goddess of a wo-'man, she would assume the goddess; 'that if power were given her, she would 'exert that power to the giver, if to no-'body else—And D—r's wife is thrown 'into my dish, who, thou knowest, kept 'her ceremonious husband at haughty 'distance, and whined in private to her 'insulting footman. O how I cursed the 'blaspheming wretches! They will make 'me, as I tell them, hate their house, and 'remove from it. And by my soul, 'Jack, I am ready at times to think that 'I should not have brought her hither, 'were it but on Sally's account. And 'yet, without knowing either Sally's 'heart, or Polly's, the dear creature re-

'selves against having any converſation 'with them but ſuch as ſhe cannot avoid. 'I am not ſorry for this, thou mayeſt 'think; ſince jealouſy in woman is not 'to be concealed from woman. And 'Sally has no command of herſelf.

'What doſt think!—Here this little 'devil Sally, not being able, as ſhe told 'me, to ſupport life under my diſplea-'ſure, was going into a fit: but when I 'ſaw her *preparing* for it, I went out of 'the room; and ſo ſhe thought it would 'not be worth her while to ſhew away.'

In this manner he mentions what his meaning was in making the lady the compliment of his abſence:

'As to leaving her; if I go but for *one* 'night, I have fulfilled my promiſe: and 'if ſhe think not, I can mutter and 'grumble, and yield again, and make a 'merit of it; and then, unable to live out 'of her preſence, ſoon return. Nor are 'women ever angry at bottom for being 'diſobeyed through exceſs of love. They 'like an uncontroulable paſſion. They 'like to have every favour raviſhed from 'them; and to be eaten and drunk quite 'up by a voracious lover. Don't I know 'the ſex!—Not ſo, indeed, as yet, my 'Clariſſa: but, however, with *her* my 'frequent egreſſes will make me look 'new to her, and create little buſy ſcenes 'between us. At the leaſt, I may ſurely, 'without exception, ſalute her at part-'ing, and at return; and will not thoſe 'occaſional freedoms, (which civility 'will warrant) by degrees, familiarize 'my charmer to them?

'But here, Jack, what ſhall I do with 'my uncle and aunts, and all my loving 'couſins? For I underſtand, that they are 'more in haſte to have me married than 'I am myſelf.'

LETTER LXII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

FRIDAY, APRIL 28.

MR. Lovelace is returned already. My brother's projects were his pretence. I could not but look upon this ſhort abſence as an evaſion of his promiſe; eſpecially as he had taken ſuch precautions with the people below; and as he knew that I propoſed to keep cloſe within doors. I cannot bear to be dealt meanly with; and angrily inſiſted, that he ſhould directly ſet out for Berkſhire, in order to engage his couſin, as he had promiſed.

'O my deareſt life!' ſaid he, 'why 'will you baniſh me from your pre-'ſence? I cannot leave you for ſo long 'a time, as you ſeem to expect I ſhould. 'I have been hovering about town ever 'ſince I left you. Edgware was the 'fartheſt place I went to; and there I 'was not able to ſtay two hours, for 'fear, at this criſis, any-thing ſhould 'happen. Who can account for the 'workings of an apprehenſive mind, 'when all that is dear and valuable to 'it is at ſtake? You may ſpare your-'ſelf the trouble of writing to any 'of your friends, till the ſolemnity has 'paſſed that ſhall entitle me to give 'weight to your application. When 'they know we are married, your bro-'ther's plots will be at an end; and 'your father, and mother, and uncles, 'muſt be reconciled to you. Why then 'ſhould you heſitate a moment to con-'firm my happineſs? Why, once more, 'would you baniſh me from you? Why 'will you not give the man, who has 'brought you into difficulties, and who 'ſo honourably wiſhes to extricate you 'from them, the happineſs of doing 'ſo?'

He was ſilent. My voice failed to ſecond the inclination I had to ſay ſome-thing not wholly diſcouraging, to a point ſo warmly preſſed.

'I'll tell you, my angel,' reſumed he, 'what I propoſe to do, if you approve 'of it. I will inſtantly go out to view 'ſome of the handſome new ſquares, or 'fine ſtreets round them, and make a 'report to you of any ſuitable houſe I 'find to be lett. I will take ſuch a one 'as you ſhall chuſe, and ſet up an equi-'page befitting our condition. You 'ſhall direct the whole. And on ſome 'early day, either before or after we 'fix, [*It muſt be at your own choice*] be 'pleaſed to make me the happieſt of 'men. And then will every-thing be 'in a deſirable train. You ſhall receive 'in your own houſe (if it can be ſo 'ſoon furniſhed as I wiſh) the com-'pliments of all my relations. Char-'lotte ſhall viſit you in the interim: 'and if it take up time, you ſhall chuſe 'whom you will honour with your 'company, firſt, ſecond, or third, in 'the ſummer-months; and on your re-'turn you ſhall find all that was want-

'ing

' ing in your new habitation supplied;
' and pleasures in a constant round shall
' attend us. O my angel, take me to
' you, instead of banishing me from
' you, and make me yours for ever!'

You see, my dear, that here was no *day* pressed for; I was not uneasy about that; and the sooner recovered myself, as there was not. But, however, I gave him no reason to upbraid me for refusing his offer of going in search of a house.

He is accordingly gone out for this purpose. But I find, that he intends to take up his lodging here to-night; and if to-night, no doubt on other nights, while he is in town. As the doors and windows of my apartment have good fastenings; as he has not, in all this time, given me cause for apprehension; as he has the pretence of my brother's schemes to plead; as the people below are very courteous and obliging; Miss Horton especially, who seems to have taken a great liking to me, and to be of a gentler temper and manners, than Miss Martin; and, as we are now in a tolerable way—I imagine, it would look particular to them all, and bring me into a debate with a man, who (let him be set upon what he will) has always a great deal to say for himself, if I were to insist upon his promise: on all these accounts, I think, I will take no notice of his lodging here, if he don't.—Let me know, my dear, your thoughts of every-thing.

You may believe I gave him back his Bank note the moment I saw him.

FRIDAY EVENING.

MR. LOVELACE has seen two or three houses; but none to his mind. But he has heard of one which looks promising, he says, and which he is to enquire about in the morning.

SATURDAY MORNING.

HE has made his enquiries, and actually seen the house he was told of last night. The owner of it is a young widow lady; who is inconsolable for the death of her husband; *Fretchville* her name. It is furnished quite in taste, every-thing being new within these six months. He believes, if I like not the furniture, the use of it may be agreed for, with the house, for a time certain: but if I like it, he will endeavour to take the one, and purchase the other, directly.

The lady sees nobody; nor are the best apartments above-stairs to be viewed till she is either absent, or gone into the country; which she talks of doing in a fortnight, or three weeks, at farthest; and to live there retired.

What Mr. Lovelace saw of the house (which were the saloon and two parlours) was perfectly elegant; and he was assured, all is of a piece. The offices are also very convenient; coach-house and stables at hand.

He shall be very impatient, he says, till I see the whole; nor will he, if he finds he can have it, look farther till I have seen it, except any-thing else offer to my liking. The price he values not.

He now does nothing but talk of the *ceremony*; but not indeed of the *day*. I don't want him to urge that—But I wonder he does not.

He has just now received a letter from Lady Betty Lawrance, by a particular hand; the contents principally relating to an affair she has in Chancery. But in the postscript she is pleased to say very respectful things of me.

They are all impatient, she says, for the happy day being over; which they flatter themselves will *ensure his reformation*.

He hoped, he told me, that I would *soon* enable him to answer *their* wishes and *his own*.

But, my dear, although the opportunity was so inviting, he urged not for the *day*. Which is the *more extraordinary*, as he was so pressing for marriage before we came to town.

He was very earnest with me to give him, and four of his friends, my company on Monday evening, at a little collation. Miss Martin and Miss Horton cannot, he says, be there, being engaged in a party of their own with two daughters of Colonel Solcombe, and two nieces of Sir Antony Holmes, upon an annual occasion. But Mrs. Sinclair will be present, and she gave him hope of the company of a young lady of very great fortune and merit, (Miss *Partington*) an heiress, to whom Colonel Sinclair, it seems, in his life-time, was guardian, and who therefore calls Mrs. Sinclair 'Mamma.'

I desired to be excused. He had laid me, I said, under a most disagreeable necessity

neceſſity of appearing as a married perſon; and I would ſee as few people as poſſible who were to think me ſo.

He would not urge it, he ſaid, if I were *much* averſe: but they were his ſelect friends; men of birth and fortune; who longed to ſee me. It was true, he added, that they, as well as his friend Doleman, believed we were married: but they thought him under the reſtrictions that he had mentioned to the people below. I might be aſſured, he told me, that his politeneſs before them ſhould be carried into the higheſt degree of reverence.

When he is ſet upon any-thing, there is no knowing, as I have ſaid heretofore, what one *can* do *. But I will not, if I can help it, be made a ſhew of; eſpecially to men of whoſe characters and principles I have no good opinion. I am, my deareſt friend, *your ever-affectionate*

CL. HARLOWE.

Mr. Lovelace in his next letter gives an account of his quick return: of his reaſons to the lady for it: of her diſpleaſure upon it: and of her urging his abſence from the ſafety ſhe was in from the ſituation of the houſe, except ſhe were to be traced out by his viſits.

'I was confoundedly puzzled,' *ſays he*, 'on this occaſion, and on her inſiſting upon the execution of a too-ready offer which I made her to go down to Berks, to bring up my couſin Charlotte to viſit and attend her. I made miſerable excuſes; and, fearing that they would be mortally reſented, as her paſſion began to riſe upon my ſaying Charlotte was delicate, which ſhe took ſtrangely wrong, I was obliged to ſcreen myſelf behind the moſt ſolemn and explicit declarations.'

He then repeats thoſe declarations, to the ſame effect with the account ſhe gives of them.

'I began,' *ſays he*, 'with an intention to keep my life of honour in view, in the declarations I made her; but, as it has been ſaid of a certain orator in the Houſe of Commons, who more than once, in a long ſpeech, convinced himſelf as he went along, and concluded againſt the ſide he ſet out intending to favour, ſo I in earneſt preſſed without reſerve for matrimony in the progreſs of my harangue, which ſtate I little thought of urging upon her with ſo much ſtrength and explicitneſs.'

He then values himſelf upon the delay that his propoſal of taking and furniſhing a houſe muſt occaſion.

He wavers in his reſolutions whether to act honourable or not by a merit ſo exalted.

He values himſelf upon his own delicacy, in expreſſing his indignation againſt her friends, for ſuppoſing what he pretends his heart riſes againſt them for preſuming to ſuppoſe.

'But have I not reaſon,' *ſays he*, 'to be angry with her, for not praiſing me for this my delicacy, when ſhe is ſo ready to call me to account for the leaſt failure in punctilio?—However, I believe I can excuſe her too, upon this generous conſideration, [For *generous* I am ſure it is, becauſe it is againſt myſelf;] that her mind being the eſſence of delicacy, the leaſt want of it ſhocks her; while the meeting with what is ſo very extraordinary to *me*, is too familiar to *her* to obtain her notice, *as* an extraordinary.'

He glories in the ſtory of the houſe, and of the young widow-poſſeſſor of it, Mrs. Fretchville he calls her; and leaves it doubtful to Mr. Belford, whether it be a real or a fictitious ſtory.

He mentions his different propoſals in relation to the ceremony, which he ſo earneſtly preſſed for; and owns his artful intention in avoiding to name the day.

'And now,' *ſays he*, 'I hope ſoon to have an opportunity to begin my operations; ſince all is *Halcyon* and ſecurity.

'It is impoſſible to deſcribe the dear creature's ſweet and ſilent confuſion, when I touched upon the matrimonial topicks.

'She *may* doubt. She *may* fear. The wiſe in all important caſes will doubt, and will fear, till they are ſure. But her apparent willingneſs to think well of a ſpirit ſo inventive, and ſo machinating, is a happy prognoſtick for me. O theſe reaſoning ladies!—How

* See Page 427. See alſo Vol. II. Page 202.

'I love

'I love these reasoning ladies!—'Tis 'all over with them, when once love 'has crept into their hearts: for then 'will they employ all their reasoning 'powers to excuse rather than to *blame* 'the conduct of the *doubted* lover, let 'appearances against him be ever so 'strong.

'Mowbray, Belton, and Tourville, 'long to see my angel, and will be 'there. She has *refused* me; but *must* 'be present notwithstanding. So gene-'rous a spirit as mine is, cannot enjoy 'it's happiness without communica-'tion. If I raise not your envy and 'admiration both at once, but half-joy 'will be the joy of having such a charm-'ing fly entangled in my web. She 'therefore must comply. And thou 'must come. And then I will shew thee 'the pride and glory of the Harlowe-'family, my implacable enemies; and 'thou shalt join with me in my triumph 'over them all.

'I know not what may still be the 'perverse beauty's fate: I want thee, 'therefore, to see and admire her, while 'she is serene and full of hope: before 'her apprehensions are realized, if 'realized they are to be; and if evil ap-'prehensions of me she really has: be-'fore her beamy eyes have lost their 'lustre: while yet her charming face 'is surrounded with all it's virgin glo-'ries; and before the plough of disap-'pointment has thrown up furrows of 'distress upon every lovely feature.

'If I can procure you this honour, 'you will be ready to laugh out, as I 'have often much ado to forbear, at 'the puritanical behaviour of the mo-'ther before this lady. Not an oath, 'not a curse, nor the least free word, 'escapes her lips. She minces in her 'gaite. She prims up her horse-mouth. 'Her voice, which, when she pleases, 'is the voice of thunder, is sunk into 'an humble whine. Her stiff hams, 'that have not been bent to a civility 'for ten years past, are now limbered 'into curtseys three deep at every word. 'Her fat arms are crossed before her; 'and she can hardly be prevailed up-'on to sit in the presence of my god-'dess.

'I am drawing up instructions for ye 'all to observe on Monday night.

'SATURDAY NIGHT.

'MOST confoundedly alarmed!—"Lord Sir, what do you think?" cried 'Dorcas—"My lady is resolved to go "to church to-morrow!" I was at 'quadrille with the women below.—"To church!" said I; and down I 'laid my cards. "*To church!*" re-'peated they, each looking upon the 'other. We had done playing for *that* 'night.

'Who could have dreamt of such a 'whim as this?—Without notice, with-'out questions! Her cloaths not come! 'No leave asked!—Impossible she should 'think of being *my wife!*—Besides, 'she don't consider, if she go to church, 'I must go too!—Yet not to ask for 'my company! Her brother and Single-'ton ready to snap her up, as far as she 'knows!—Known by her cloaths—'Her person, her features, so distin-'guished!—Not such another woman 'in England!—"To church, of all "places! is the devil in the girl?" said 'I, as soon as I could speak.

'Well, but to leave this subject till 'to-morrow morning, I will now give 'you the instructions I have drawn up 'for yours and your companions be-'haviour on Monday night.

'Instructions to be observed by John 'Belford, Richard Mowbray, Tho-'mas Belton, and James Tourville, 'Esquires of the Body to General Ro-'bert Lovelace, on their admission to 'the presence of his goddess.

'YE must be sure to let it sink deep 'into your heavy heads, that 'there is no such lady in the world as 'Miss Clarissa Harlowe; and that she 'is neither more nor less than Mrs. 'Lovelace, though at present, to my 'shame be it spoken, a virgin.

'Be mindful also, that your old 'mother's name, after that of *her* mo-'ther when a maid, is Sinclair: that 'her husband was a lieutenant-colonel, 'and all that *you*, Belford, know from 'honest Doleman's letter of her*, that 'let your brethren know.

'Mowbray and Tourville, the two 'greatest blunderers of the four, I al-'low to be acquainted with the wi-'dow and nieces, from the knowledge

* See Page 376, et. seq.

'they

'they had of the colonel. They will 'not forbear familiarities of ſpeech to 'the mother, as of longer acquaintance 'than a day. So I have ſuited their 'parts to their capacities.

'They may praiſe the widow and 'the colonel for people of great honour '—But not too groſsly; nor to labour 'the point ſo as to render themſelves 'ſuſpected.

'The mother will lead ye into her 'own and the colonel's praiſes; and 'Tourville and Mowbray may be both 'her vouchers—I, and you, and Bel-'ton, muſt be only hearſay confirmers.

'As poverty is generally ſuſpectible, 'the widow muſt be got handſomely 'aforehand; and no doubt but ſhe is. 'The elegance of her houſe and fur-'niture, and her readineſs to diſcharge 'all demands upon her, which ſhe does 'with oſtentation enough, and which 'makes her neighbours, I ſuppoſe, like 'her the better, demonſtrate this. She 'will propoſe to do handſome things by 'her two nieces. Sally is near mar-'riage—with an eminent woollen-dra-'per in the Strand, if ye have a mind 'to it; for there are five or ſix of them 'there.

'The nieces may be enquired after, 'ſince they will be abſent, as perſons 'reſpected by Mowbray and Tourville, 'for their late worthy uncle's ſake.

'Watch ye diligently every turn of 'my countenance—every motion of my 'eye; for in my eye, and in my coun-'tenance, will ye find a ſovereign re-'gulator. I need not bid you reſpect 'me mightily: your allegiance obliges 'you to that: and who that ſees me, 'reſpects me not?

'Priſcilla Partington (for her looks 'ſo innocent, and diſcretion ſo deep, 'yet ſeeming ſo ſoftly) may be greatly 'relied upon. She will accompany the 'mother, gorgeouſly dreſſed, with all 'her Jew's extravagance flaming out 'upon her; and firſt *induce*, then *coun-'tenance*, the lady. She has her cue, 'and I hope will make her acquaintance 'coveted by my charmer.

'Miſs Partington's hiſtory is this: 'The daughter of Colonel Sinclair's 'brother-in-law: that brother-in-law 'may have been a Turky merchant, 'or any merchant, who died confound-'edly rich: the colonel one of her guar-'dians, [*Collateral credit in that to the 'old one:*] whence ſhe always calls 'Mrs. Sinclair *Mamma*; though not 'ſucceeding to the truſt.

'She is juſt come to paſs a day or two, 'and then to return to her ſurviving guar-'dian's at Barnet.

'Miſs Partington has ſuitors a little 'hundred; (her grandmother, an alder-'man's dowager, having left her a great 'additional fortune) and is not truſted 'out of her guardian's houſe, without 'an old governante noted for diſcretion, 'except to her mamma Sinclair; with 'whom now-and-then ſhe is permitted 'to be for a week together.

'Priſ. will mamma-up Mrs. Sinclair, 'and will undertake to court her guar-'dian to let her paſs a delightful week 'with her—Sir Edward Holden, he may 'as well be, if your ſhallow pates will 'not be clogged with too many circum-'ſtantials. Lady Holden perhaps will 'come with her; for ſhe always delighted 'in her mamma Sinclair's company: and 'talks of her, and her good manage-'ment, twenty times a day.

'Be it principally thy part, Jack, who 'art a parading fellow, and aimeſt at 'wiſdom, to keep thy brother-varlets 'from blundering; for, as thou muſt 'have obſerved from what I have writ-'ten, we have the moſt watchful and 'moſt penetrating lady in the world to 'deal with: a lady worth deceiving! But 'whoſe eyes will pierce to the bottom of 'your ſhallow ſouls the moment ſhe hears 'you open. Do thou therefore place 'thyſelf between Mowbray and Tour-'ville: their toes to be played upon and 'commanded by thine, if they go wrong; 'thy elbows to be the miniſters of ap-'probation.

'As to your general behaviour; no 'hypocriſy!—I hate it: ſo does my 'charmer. If I had ſtudied for it, I be-'lieve I *could* have been an hypocrite: 'but my general character is ſo well 'known, that I ſhould have been ſu-'ſpected at once, had I aimed at making 'myſelf too white. But what neceſſity 'can there be for hypocriſy, unleſs the 'generality of the ſex were to *refuſe* us 'for our immoralities? The beſt of them 'love to have the credit of reforming us. 'Let the ſweet ſouls try for it: if they 'fail, their intent was good. That will 'be a conſolation to them. And as to '*us*, our work will be the eaſier; our ſins 'the fewer: ſince they will draw them-'ſelves in with a very little of our help; 'and we ſhall ſave a parcel of curſed 'falſhoods,

falſhoods, and appear to be what we *are* both to angels and men.—Mean time their very grandmothers will acquit us, and reproach them with their *ſelf-do, ſelf-have*; and as having *erred againſt knowledge*, and ventured againſt *manifeſt appearances*. What folly therefore for men of our character to be hypocrites!

'Be ſure to inſtruct the reſt, and do thou thyſelf remember, not to talk obſcenely. You know I never permitted any of you to talk obſcenely. Time enough for that, when ye grow old, and can ONLY talk. Beſides, ye muſt conſider Priſc.'s *affected* character, my goddeſs's *real* one. Far from obſcenity therefore, do not ſo much as touch upon the double entendre. What! as I have often ſaid, cannot you touch a lady's heart, without wounding her ear?

'It is *neceſſary*, that ye ſhould appear worſe men than myſelf. You cannot help appearing ſo, you'll ſay. Well then, there will be the leſs reſtraint upon you—The leſs reſtraint, the leſs affectation.—And if Belton begins his favourite ſubject in behalf of *keeping*, it may make me take upon myſelf to oppoſe him: but fear not; I ſhall not give the argument all my force.

'She muſt have ſome curioſity, I think, to ſee what ſort of men my companions are: ſhe will not expect any of you to be ſaints. Are ye not men born to conſiderable fortunes, although ye are not all of ye men of parts? Who is it in this mortal life, that *wealth does not miſlead?* And as it gives people the *power of being miſchievous*, does it not require great virtue to forbear the uſe of that power? Is not the devil ſaid to be the god of this world? Are we not children of this world? Well then! Let me tell thee my opinion—It is this, that were it not for the *poor* and the *middling*, the world would probably, long ago, have been deſtroyed by fire from Heaven. Ingrateful wretches the reſt, thou wilt be apt to ſay, to make ſuch ſorry returns, as they generally do make, to the poor and the *middling!*

'This dear lady is prodigiouſly learned in *theories*. But as to *practics*, as to *experimentals*, muſt be, as you know from her tender years, a mere novice. Till ſhe knew me, I dare ſay, ſhe did not believe, whatever ſhe had read, that there were ſuch fellows in the world, as ſhe will ſee in you four. I ſhall have much pleaſure in obſerving how ſhe'll ſtare at her company, when ſhe finds me the politeſt man of the five.

'And ſo much for inſtructions general and particular for your behaviour on Monday night.

'And let me add, that you muſt attend to every minute circumſtance, whether you think there be reaſon in it, or not. Deep, like golden ore, frequently lies my meaning, and richly worth digging for. The hint of *leaſt* moment, as *you* may imagine it, is often pregnant with events of the *greateſt*. Be implicit. Am not I your general? Did I ever lead you on that I brought you not off with ſafety and ſucceſs, ſometimes to your own ſtupid aſtoniſhment?

'And now, methinks, thou art curious to know, what can be my view in riſquing the diſpleaſure of my fair-one, and alarming her fears, after four or five halcyon days have gone over our heads? I'll ſatisfy thee.

'The viſitors of the two nieces will croud the houſe. Beds will be ſcarce. Miſs Partington, a ſweet modeſt genteel girl, will be prodigiouſly taken with my charmer; will want to begin a friendſhip with her. A ſhare in her bed, for one night only, will be requeſted. Who knows, but on that very Monday night I may be ſo unhappy as to give *mortal offence* to my beloved? *The ſhyeſt birds may be caught napping.* Should ſhe *attempt to fly me* upon it, cannot I *detain her?* Should ſhe *actually fly*, cannot I *bring her back* by authority civil or uncivil, if I have evidence upon evidence that ſhe acknowledged, though but tacitly, her marriage?—And *ſhould I, or ſhould I not* ſucceed, and ſhe *forgive me*, or if ſhe but deſcend to *expoſtulate*, or if ſhe *bear me in her ſight*; then will ſhe be all my own. All delicacy is my charmer. I long to ſee how ſuch a delicacy, on *any* of theſe occaſions, will behave, and in my ſituation it behoves me to provide againſt every accident.

'I muſt take care, knowing what an eel I have to do with, that the little riggling rogue does not ſlip through my fingers. How ſilly ſhould I look ſtaring after her, when ſhe had ſhot

'from me into the muddy river, her family, from which with so much difficulty I have taken her!

'Well then; here are—Let me see—'How many persons are there who, after 'Monday night, will be able to swear, 'that she has gone by my name, answered to my name, had no other view in 'leaving her friends, but to go by my 'name? her own relations neither able 'nor willing to deny it.—First, here are '*my* servants; her servant Dorcas; Mrs. 'Sinclair; Mrs. Sinclair's two nieces; 'and Miss Partington.

'But for fear these evidences should 'be suspected, here comes the jet of the 'business—No less than four worthy 'gentlemen of fortune and family, who 'were all in company such a night particularly, at a collation to which they 'were invited by Robert Lovelace, of 'Sandoun Hall in the county of Lancaster, Esquire, in company with Magdalen Sinclair widow, and Priscilla Partington spinster, and the lady complainant; when the said Robert Lovelace addressed himself to the said lady, 'on a multitude of occasions, as *his* 'wife; as they and others did, as Mrs. 'Lovelace; every-one complimenting 'and congratulating her upon her nuptials; and that she received such their 'compliments and congratulations with 'no other visible displeasure or repugnance, than such as a young bride, full 'of blushes and pretty confusion, might 'be supposed to express upon such contemplative revolvings as those compliments would naturally inspire. Nor do 'thou rave at me, Jack, nor *rebel*—Dost 'think I brought the dear creature hither for nothing?

'And here's a faint sketch of my plot. '—Stand by, varlets—Tanta-ra-ra-ra! '—Veil your bonnets, and confess your 'master!'

LETTER LXIII.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

SUNDAY.

HAVE been at church, Jack—Behaved admirably well too! My charmer is pleased with me now: for I was exceedingly attentive to the discourse, and very ready in the auditor's part of the service.—Eyes did not much wander. How could they, when the loveliest object, infinitely the loveliest in the whole church, was in my view!

Dear creature! how fervent, how amiable, in her devotions! I have got her to own *that she prayed for me.* I hope a prayer from so excellent a mind will not be made in vain.

There is, after all, something beautifully solemn in devotion. The Sabbath is a charming institution to *keep* the heart right, when it *is* right. One day in seven, how reasonable!—I think I'll go to church once a day often. I fancy it will go a great way towards making me a reformed man. To see multitudes of well-appearing people all joining in one reverend act: an exercise how worthy of a rational being! Yet it adds a sting or two to my former stings, when I think of my projects with regard to this charming creature. In my conscience, I believe if I were to go constantly to church, I could not pursue them.

I had a scheme come into my head while there: but I will renounce it, because it obtruded itself upon me in so good a place. Excellent creature! How many *ruins* has she prevented by attaching me to herself; by engrossing my whole attention!

But let me tell thee what passed between us in my first visit of this morning; and then I will acquaint thee more largely with my good behaviour at church.

I could not be admitted till after eight. I found her ready prepared to go out. I pretended to be ignorant of her intention, having charged Dorcas not to own that she had told me of it.

'Going abroad, Madam?'—with an air of indifference.

'Yes, Sir; I intend to go to church.'

'I hope, Madam, I shall have the 'honour to attend you.'

No: she designed to take a chair, and go to the next church.

This startled me: a chair to carry her to the next church from Mrs. Sinclair's, her right name not Sinclair, and to bring her back hither in the face of people who might not think well of the house!—There was no permitting that. Yet I was to appear indifferent. But said, I should take it for a favour, if

if she would permit me to attend her in her coach, as there was time for it, to St. Paul's.

She made objections to the gaiety of my dress; and told me, that if she went to St. Paul's, she could go in a coach without *me*.

I objected Singleton and her brother, and offered to dress in the plainest suit I had.

'I beg the favour of attending you, 'dear Madam,' said I. 'I have not 'been at church a great while. We 'shall sit in different stalls. And the 'next time I go, I hope it will be to 'give myself a title to the greatest 'blessing I can receive.'

She made some further objections: but at last permitted me the honour of attending her.

I got myself placed in her eye, that the time might not seem tedious to me; for we were there early. And I gained her good opinion, as I mentioned above, by my behaviour.

The subject of the discourse was particular enough: it was about a prophet's story or parable of an ewe-lamb taken by a rich man from a poor one, who dearly loved it, and whose only comfort it was. Designed to strike remorse into David, on his adultery with Uriah's wife Bathsheba, and his murder of the husband. These women, Jack, have been the occasion of all manner of mischief from the beginning! Now, when David, full of indignation, swore [King David would swear, Jack: but how shouldst thou know who King David was? The story is in the Bible] that the rich man should surely die; Nathan, which was the prophet's name, and a good ingenious fellow, cried out, (which were the words of the text) '*Thou art the* '*man!*'—By my soul I thought the parson looked directly at me: and at that moment I cast my eye full on my ewe-lamb. But I must tell thee too, that I thought a good deal of my rose-bud.—'A better man than King Da-'vid, in *that* point, however!' thought I.

When we came home, we talked upon the subject; and I shewed my charmer my attention to the discourse, by letting her know where the doctor made the most of his subject, and where it might have been touched to greater advantage: for it is really a very affecting story, and has as pretty a contrivance in it as ever I read. And this I did in such a grave way, that she seemed more and more pleased with me; and I have no doubt, that I shall get her to favour me to-morrow night with her company at my collation.

SUNDAY EVENING.

WE all dined together in Mrs. Sinclair's parlour. All *exceedingly* right! The two nieces have topp'd their parts; Mrs. Sinclair hers. Never so easy as now!—She really thought a little oddly of these people at first; she said: Mrs. Sinclair seemed very forbidding! Her nieces were persons with whom she could not wish to be acquainted. 'But 'really we should not be too hasty in 'our censures. Some people improve 'upon us. The widow seems *tolerable*.' She went no farther than *tolerable*. Miss Martin and Miss Horton are young people of good sense, and have read a great deal. What Miss Martin particularly said of marriage, and of her humble servant, was very solid. She believes, with such notions she cannot make a bad wife. I have said, Sally's humble servant is a woollen-draper of great reputation; and she is soon to be married.

I have been letting her into thy character, and into the characters of my other three esquires, in hopes to excite her curiosity to see you to-morrow night. I have told her some of the *worst*, as well as *best* parts of your characters, in order to exalt myself, and to obviate any sudden surprizes, as well as to teach her, what sort of men she may expect to see, if she will oblige me with her company.

By her after-observations upon each of you, I shall judge what I may or may not do to *obtain* or *keep* her good opinion; what she will *like*, what *not*; and so pursue the one, or avoid the other, as I see proper.—So, while she is penetrating into your shallow heads, I shall enter *her* heart, and know what to bid *my own* to hope for.

The house is to be taken in three weeks: all will be over in three weeks, or bad will be my luck!—Who knows but in three days?—Have I not carried that great point of making her pass for my wife to the people below? And that other great one, of fixing myself here night and day?—What woman ever escaped me, who lodged under

one roof with me?—The houſe too, THE houſe; the people, people after my own heart: her ſervants, Will. and Dorcas, both *my* ſervants—*Three days* did I ſay! Pho! pho! pho!—*Three hours!*

* * *

I HAVE carried my third point; but ſo extremely to the diſlike of my charmer, that I have been threatened, for ſuffering Miſs Partington to be introduced to her without her leave. Which laid her under a neceſſity to deny or comply with the urgent requeſt of ſo fine a young lady; who had engaged to honour me at my collation, on condition that my beloved would be preſent at it.

To be obliged to appear before my friends as what ſhe was not! She was for inſiſting, that I ſhould acquaint the women here with the truth of the matter; and not go on propagating ſtories for her to countenance; making her a ſharer in my guilt.

But what points will not perſeverance carry? eſpecially when it is covered over with the face of yielding *now*, and, Parthian-like, returning to the charge *anon*. Do not the ſex carry all their points with their men by the ſame methods? Have I converſed with them ſo freely as I have done, and learnt nothing of them? Didſt thou ever know that a woman's denial of any favour, whether the leaſt or the greateſt, that my heart was ſet upon, ſtood her in any ſtead? The more perverſe ſhe, the more ſteady I; that is my rule.

But the point thus ſo much againſt her will carried, I doubt thou wilt ſee in her more of a ſullen than of an obliging charmer. For when Miſs Partington was withdrawn, What was Miſs Partington to her? In her ſituation ſhe wanted no new acquaintance. And what were my four friends to her in her preſent circumſtances? She would aſſure me, if ever again—And there ſhe ſtopt, with a twirl of her hand.

When we meet, I will, in her preſence, tipping thee a wink, ſhew thee the motion, for it was a very pretty one. Quite new. Yet have I ſeen an hundred pretty paſſionate twirls too, in my time, from other fair-ones. How univerſally engaging is it to put a woman of ſenſe, to whom a man is not married, in a paſſion, let the reception given to every ranting ſcene in our plays teſtify. Take care, my charmer, now thou art come to delight me with thy angry twirls, that thou tempteſt me not to provoke a *variety of them* from one, whoſe every motion, whoſe every air, carries in it ſo much ſenſe and ſoul.

But, angry or pleaſed, this charming creature muſt be all lovelineſs. Her features are all harmony, and made for one another. No other feature could be ſubſtituted in the place of any one of hers, but muſt abate of her perfection: and think you that I do not long to have your opinion of my fair prize?

If you love to ſee features that glow, though the heart is frozen, and never yet was thawed; if you love fine ſenſe, and adages flowing through teeth of ivory, and lips of coral; an eye that penetrates all things; a voice that is harmony itſelf; an air of grandeur, mingled with a ſweetneſs that cannot be deſcribed; a politeneſs that, if ever equalled, was never excelled—You'll ſee all theſe excellences, and ten times more, in this my GLORIANA.

Mark her majeſtick fabrick!—She's a temple
Sacred by birth, and built by hands divine;
Her ſoul the deity that lodges there:
Nor is the pile unworthy of the god.

Or, to deſcribe her in a ſofter ſtyle with Rowe—

'The bloom of op'ning flow'rs, unſully'd beauty,
'Softneſs, and ſweeteſt innocence ſhe wears,
'And looks like nature in the world's firſt ſpring.'

Adieu, varlets four!—At ſix on Monday evening, I expect ye all.

LETTER LXIV.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

SUNDAY, APRIL 30.

MR. Lovelace in his laſt letters having taken notice of the moſt material paſſages contained in this letter, the following extracts from it are only inſerted.

She gives pretty near the ſame account that he does of what paſſed between

tween them, on her reſolution to go to church; and of his propoſal of St. Paul's, and deſire of attending her. She praiſes his good behaviour there; as alſo the diſcourſe, and the preacher: is pleaſed with it's ſeaſonableneſs. Gives particulars of the converſation between them afterwards, and commends the good obſervations he makes upon the ſermon.

'I AM willing,' *ſays ſhe*, 'to have 'hopes of him: but am ſo unable to 'know how to depend upon his ſeri'ouſneſs for an hour together, that all 'my favourable accounts of him in 'this reſpect muſt be taken with al'lowance.

'Being very much preſſed, I could 'not tell how to refuſe dining with the 'widow and her nieces this day. I 'am better pleaſed with them, than I 'ever thought I ſhould be. I cannot 'help blaming myſelf for my readi'neſs to give ſevere cenſures, where re'putation is concerned. Peoples ways, 'humours, conſtitutions, education, 'and opportunities allowed for, my 'dear, many perſons, as far as I know, 'may appear blameleſs, whom others 'of different humours and educations 'are too apt to blame; and who, from 'the ſame fault, may be as ready to 'blame *them*. I will therefore make 'it a rule to myſelf for the future, 'never to judge peremptorily on firſt 'appearances: but yet I muſt obſerve 'that theſe are not people I ſhould 'chuſe to be intimate with, or whoſe 'ways I can like. Although, for the 'ſtations they are in, they may go 'through the world with tolerable 'credit.

'Mr. Lovelace's behaviour has been 'ſuch, as makes me call this, ſo far 'as it is paſſed, an agreeable day. Yet, 'when eaſieſt as to him, my ſituation 'with my friends takes place in my 'thoughts, and cauſes me many a tear.

'I am the more pleaſed with the 'people of the houſe, becauſe of the 'perſons of rank they are acquainted 'with, and who viſit them.

'SUNDAY EVENING.

'I AM ſtill well pleaſed with Mr. 'Lovelace's behaviour. We have had 'a good deal of ſerious diſcourſe to'gether. The man has really juſt and 'good notions. He confeſſes how 'much he is pleaſed with this day, and 'hopes for many ſuch. Nevertheleſs, 'he ingenuouſly warned me, that his 'unlucky vivacity might return: but 'he doubted not, that he ſhould be 'fixed at laſt by my example and con'verſation.

'He has given me an entertaining 'account of the four gentlemen he is 'to meet to-morrow night: *entertaining*, I mean, for his humorous de'ſcription of their perſons, manners, '*&c.* but ſuch a deſcription as is far 'from being to their praiſe. Yet he 'ſeemed rather to deſign to divert my 'melancholy by it, than to degrade 'them. I think at bottom, my dear, 'that he muſt be a good-natured man; 'but that he was ſpoiled young for 'want of check or controul.

'I cannot but call this, my circum'ſtances conſidered, an happy day to 'the end of it. Indeed, my dear, I 'think I could prefer him to all the 'men I ever knew, were he but to be 'always what he has been this day. 'You ſee how ready I am to own all 'you have charged me with, when I 'find myſelf out. It is a difficult 'thing, I believe, ſometimes, for a 'young creature that is able to delibe'rate with herſelf, to know when ſhe 'loves, or when ſhe hates: but I am 'reſolved, as much as poſſible, to be 'determined both in my hatred and 'love by *actions*, as they make the 'man worthy or unworthy.'

She dates again on Monday, and declares herſelf highly diſpleaſed at Miſs Partington's being introduced to her: and ſtill more for being obliged to promiſe to be preſent at Mr. Lovelace's collation. She foreſees, ſhe ſays, a murdered evening.

LETTER LXV.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

MONDAY NIGHT, MAY 1.

I Have juſt eſcaped from the very diſagreeable company I was obliged, ſo much againſt my will, to be in. As a very particular relation of this even'ing's converſation would be painful to me,

me, you must content yourself with what you shall be able to collect from the outlines, as I may call them, of the characters of the persons; assisted by the little histories Mr. Lovelace gave me of each yesterday.

The names of the gentlemen are Belton, Mowbray, Tourville, and Belford. These four, with Mrs. Sinclair, Miss Partington, the great heiress mentioned in my last, Mr. Lovelace, and myself, made up the company.

I gave you before the favourable side of Miss Partington's character, such as it was given me by Mrs. Sinclair, and her nieces. I will now add a few words from my own observation upon her behaviour in *this* company.

In *better* company perhaps she would have appeared to less disadvantage: but, notwithstanding her *innocent looks*, which Mr. Lovelace also highly praised, *he* is the last person whose judgment I would take upon real modesty. For I observed, that, upon some talk from the gentlemen, not free enough to be openly censured, yet too indecent in it's implication to come from well-bred persons, in the company of virtuous people, this young lady was very ready to apprehend; and yet, by smiles and simperings, to encourage, rather than discourage, the culpable freedoms of persons, who, in what they went out of their way to say, must either be guilty of absurdity, meaning *nothing*; or meaning *something*, of rudeness *.

But indeed I have seen women, of whom I had a better opinion, than I can say I have of Mrs. Sinclair, who have allowed *gentlemen*, and *themselves* too, in greater liberties of this sort, than I have thought consistent with that purity of manners which ought to be the distinguishing characteristick of our sex: for what are *words*, but the *body* and *dress* of *thought*? And is not the mind of a person strongly indicated by outward dress?

But to the *gentlemen*; as they must be called in right of their ancestors, it seems; for no other do they appear to have.

Mr. Belton has had university-education, and was designed for the gown; but that not suiting with the gaiety of his temper, and an uncle dying, who devised to him a good estate, he quitted the college, came up to town, and commenced fine gentleman. He is said to be a man of sense.—Mr. Belton dresses gaily, but not quite foppishly; drinks hard; keeps all hours, and glories in doing so; games, and has been hurt by that pernicious diversion: he is about thirty years of age; his face is of a fiery red, somewhat bloated and pimply; and his irregularities threaten a brief duration to the sensual dream he is in. For he has a short consumptive cough, which seems to denote bad lungs; yet makes himself and his friends merry by his stupid and inconsiderate jests upon very threatening symptoms which ought to make him more serious.

Mr. Mowbray has been a great traveller; speaks as many languages as Mr. Lovelace himself, but not so fluently: is of a good family; seems to be about thirty-three or thirty-four; tall and comely in his person; bold and daring in his look: is a large-boned strong man; has a great scar in his forehead, with a dent, as if his scull had been beaten in there; and a seamed scar in his right-cheek. He dresses likewise very gaily: has his servants always about him, whom he is continually calling upon, and sending on the most trifling messages; half a dozen instances of which we had in the little time I was among them; while they seem to watch the turn of his fierce eye, to be ready to run, before they have half his message, and serve him with fear and trembling. Yet to his equals the man seems tolerable: he talks not amiss upon publick entertainments and diversions; especially upon those abroad. Yet has a romancing air; and avers things strongly, which seem quite improbable. Indeed, he *doubts* nothing, but what he ought to *believe*: for he jests upon sacred things; and professes to hate the clergy of all religions. He has high notions of *honour*, a word hardly ever out of his mouth; but seems to have no great regard to *morals*.

Mr. Tourville occasionally told his age; just turned of thirty-one. He is also of an ancient family; but in his person and manners, more of what I

* Mr. Belford in Letter LVI. of Vol. IV. reminds Mr. Lovelace of some particular topicks which passed in their conversation, extremely to the lady's honour.

call

call the coxcomb, than any of his companions. He dreſſes richly; would be thought elegant in the choice and faſhion of what he wears; yet, after all, appears rather tawdry than fine. One ſees, by the care he takes of his outſide, and the notice he beſpeaks from *every-one* by his *own* notice of himſelf, that the inſide takes up the leaſt of his attention. He dances finely, Mr. Lovelace ſays: is a maſter of muſick; and ſinging is one of his principal excellences. They prevailed upon him to ſing; and he obliged them both in Italian and French; and, to do him juſtice, his ſongs in both were decent. They were all highly delighted with his performance; but his greateſt admirers were Mrs. Sinclair, Miſs Partington, and *himſelf*. To me he appeared to have a great deal of affectation.

Mr. Tourville's converſation and addreſs are inſufferably full of thoſe really groſs affronts upon the underſtanding of our ſex, which the moderns call *compliments*, and are intended to paſs for ſo many inſtances of good-breeding, though the moſt hyperbolical, unnatural ſtuff that can be conceived, and which can only ſerve to ſhew the inſincerity of the *complimenter*; and the ridiculous light in which the *complimented* appears in his eyes, if he ſuppoſes a woman capable of reliſhing the romantick abſurdities of his ſpeeches.

He affects to introduce into his common talk Italian and French words; and often anſwers an Engliſh queſtion in French, which language he greatly prefers to the barbarouſly hiſſing Engliſh. But then he never fails to tranſlate into this his *odious* native tongue the words and the ſentences he ſpeaks in the other two—Leſt, perhaps, it ſhould be queſtioned whether he underſtands what he ſays.

He loves to tell ſtories: always calls them *merry*, *facetious*, *good*, or *excellent*, before he begins, in order to beſpeak the attention of the hearers; but never gives himſelf concern in the *progreſs* or *concluſion* of them, to make good what he promiſes in his *preface*. Indeed he ſeldom brings any of them to a concluſion; for if his company have patience to hear him out, he breaks in upon himſelf by ſo many parenthetical intruſions, as one may call them, and has ſo many incidents ſpringing in upon him, that he frequently drops his own thread, and ſometimes fits down ſatisfied half-way; or, if at other times he would reſume it, he applies to his company to help him in again, with a *devil fetch him* if he remembers what he was driving at—But enough, and too much of Mr. Tourville.

Mr. BELFORD is the fourth gentleman, and one of whom Mr. Lovelace ſeems more fond than any of the reſt; for he is a man of tried bravery, it ſeems; and this pair of friends came acquainted upon occaſion of a quarrel (poſſibly about a woman) which brought on a challenge, and a meeting at Kenſington Gravel-pits; which ended without unhappy conſequences, by the mediation of three gentlemen ſtrangers, juſt as each had made a paſs at the other.

Mr. Belford it ſeems is about ſeven or eight-and-twenty. He is the youngeſt of the five, except Mr. Lovelace: and they are perhaps the wickedeſt; for they ſeem to lead the other three as they pleaſe. Mr. Belford, as the others, dreſſes gaily. But has not thoſe advantages of perſon, nor from his dreſs, which Mr. Lovelace is too proud of. He has, however, the appearance and air of a gentleman. He is well read in claſſical authors, and in the beſt Engliſh poets and writers: and, by his means, the converſation took now-and-then a more agreeable turn: and I, who endeavoured to put the beſt face I could upon my ſituation, as I paſſed for Mrs. Lovelace with them, made ſhift to join in it, at ſuch times, and received abundance of compliments from all the company, on the obſervations I made*.

Mr. Belford ſeems good-natured and obliging; and, although very complaiſant, not ſo fulſomely ſo, as Mr. Tourville; and has a polite and eaſy manner of expreſſing his ſentiments on all occaſions. He ſeems to delight in a logical way of argumentation, as alſo does Mr. Belton. Theſe two attacked each other in this way; and both looked at us women, as if to obſerve whether we did not admire their learning, or, when they had ſaid a ſmart thing, their wit. But Mr. Belford had viſibly the advantage of the other,

* See Letter LVI. of Vol. IV. above referred to.

having

having quicker parts, and by taking the worst side of the argument, seemed to *think* he had. Upon the whole of his behaviour and conversation, he put me in mind of that character in Milton—

——'His tongue
'Dropt manna, and could make the worse 'appear
'The better reason, to perplex and dash
'Maturest counsels; for his thoughts were 'low;
'To vice industrious: but to nobler deeds
'Tim'rous and slothful:—yet he pleas'd the 'ear.'

How little so ever matters in general may be to our liking, we are apt, when hope is strong enough to permit it, to endeavour to make the best we can of the lot we have drawn; and I could not but observe often, how much Mr. Lovelace excelled all his four friends in every-thing they seemed desirous to excel in. But, as to wit and vivacity, he had no equal there. All the others gave up to him, when his lips began to open. The haughty Mowbray would call upon the prating Tourville for silence, and would elbow the supercilious Belton into attention, when Lovelace was going to speak. And when he had spoken, the words, 'Charming fellow!' with a free word of admiration or envy, fell from every mouth.

He has indeed so many advantages in his person and manner, that what would be inexcusable in another, would, if one watched not over one's self, and did not endeavour to distinguish what is the essence of right and wrong, look becoming in him.

Mr. Belford, to my no small vexation and confusion, with the forwardness of a favoured and intrusted friend, singled me out, on Mr. Lovelace's being sent for down, to make me congratulatory compliments on my supposed nuptials; which he did with a caution, not to insist too long on the rigorous vow I had imposed upon a man so universally admired—

'See him among twenty men,' said he, 'all of distinction, and nobody is 'regarded but Mr. Lovelace.'

It must, indeed, be confessed, that there is in his whole deportment a natural dignity, which renders all insolent or imperative demeanor as unnecessary as inexcusable. Then that deceiving sweetness which appears in his smiles, in his accent, in his whole aspect, and address, when he thinks it worth his while to oblige, or endeavour to attract, how does this shew, that he was *born* innocent, as I may say; that he was not *naturally* the cruel, the boisterous, the impetuous creature, which the wicked company he may have fallen into have made him! For he has, besides, an open, and, I think, an honest countenance. Don't *you* think so, my dear?—On all these specious appearances, have I founded my hopes of seeing him a reformed man.

But it is amazing to me, I own, that with so much of the gentleman, such a general knowledge of books and men, such a skill in the learned as well as modern languages, he can take so much delight as he does in the company of such persons as I have described, and in subjects of frothy impertinence, unworthy of his talents, and of his natural and acquired advantages. I can think but of one reason for it, and that must argue a very low mind, his VANITY; which makes him desirous of being considered as the head of the people he consorts with. A man to love praise, yet to be content to draw it from such contaminated springs!

One compliment passed from Mr. Belford to Mr. Lovelace, which hastened my quitting the shocking company—'You are a happy man, Mr. Lovelace,' said he, upon some fine speeches made him by Mrs. Sinclair, and assented to by Miss Partington: 'you have so much 'courage and so much wit, that neither 'man nor woman can stand before 'you.'

Mr. Belford looked at me, when he spoke: yes, my dear, he smilingly looked at me: and he looked upon his complimented friend: and all their *assenting*, and therefore *affronting* eyes, both mens and womens, were turned upon your Clarissa: at least, my self-reproaching heart made me think so; for that would hardly permit my eye to look up.

Oh! my dear, were but a woman, who gives reason to the world to think her to be in love with a man, [and this must be believed to be my case: or to what can my *supposed* voluntary going off with Mr. Lovelace be imputed?] to reflect one moment on the exaltation she gives *him*, and the disgrace she brings

brings upon *herſelf*; the low pity, the ſilent contempt, the inſolent ſneers and whiſpers, to which ſhe makes herſelf obnoxious from a cenſuring world of both ſexes; how would ſhe deſpiſe herſelf! and how much more eligible would ſhe think death itſelf than ſuch a diſcovered debaſement!

What I have thus in general touched upon, will account to you, why I could not more particularly relate what paſſed in this evening's converſation: which, as may be gathered from what I have written, abounded with *approbatory* accuſations, and *ſuppoſed* witty retorts.

LETTER LXVI.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

MONDAY MIDNIGHT.

I Am very much vexed and diſturbed at an odd incident. Mrs. Sinclair has juſt now left me; I believe in diſpleaſure, on my declining to comply with a requeſt ſhe made me: which was, to admit Miſs Partington to a ſhare in my bed; her houſe being crouded by her nieces gueſts and by their attendants, as well as by thoſe of Miſs Partington.

There might be nothing in it; and my denial carried a ſtiff and ill-natured appearance. But inſtantly, upon her making the requeſt, it came into my thought, that I was in a manner a ſtranger to every-body in the houſe: not ſo much as a ſervant I could call my own, or of whom I had any great opinion: that there were four men of free manners in the houſe, *avowed* ſupporters of Mr. Lovelace in matters of offence; himſelf a man of enterprize; all, as far as I knew, (and as I had reaſon to think by their noiſy mirth after I left them) drinking deeply: that Miſs Partington herſelf is not ſo baſhful a perſon as ſhe was repreſented to me to be: that *officious pains* were taken to give me a good opinion of her: and that Mrs. Sinclair made a greater parade in prefacing the requeſt, than ſuch a requeſt needed. 'To deny,' thought I, 'can carry only an appearance of 'ſingularity to people who *already* 'think me ſingular. To conſent, may 'poſſibly, if not probably, be attended 'with inconveniences.' The conſequences of the alternative ſo very diſproportionate, I thought it more prudent to incur the cenſure, than to riſque the inconvenience.

I told her, that I was writing a long letter: that I ſhould chuſe to write till I were ſleepy: and that a companion would be a reſtraint upon me, and I upon her.

She was loth, ſhe ſaid, that ſo delicate a young creature and ſo great a fortune as Miſs Partington, ſhould be put to lie with Dorcas in a preſs-bed. She ſhould be very ſorry, if ſhe had aſked an improper thing. She had never been ſo put to it before. And Miſs would ſtay up with *her* till I had done writing.

Alarmed at this urgency, and it being eaſier to perſiſt in a denial *given*, than to give it at *firſt*, I ſaid, Miſs Partington ſhould be welcome to my whole bed, and I would retire into the dining-room, and there, locking myſelf in, write all the night.

The poor thing, ſhe ſaid, was afraid to lie alone. To be ſure Miſs Partington would not put me to ſuch an inconvenience.

She then withdrew: but returned; begged my pardon for returning: but the poor child, ſhe ſaid, was in tears. Miſs Partington had never ſeen a young lady ſhe ſo much admired, and ſo much wiſhed to imitate, as me. The dear girl hoped that nothing had paſſed in her behaviour to give me diſlike to her. —Should ſhe bring her to me?

I was very buſy, I ſaid. The letter I was writing was upon a very important ſubject. I hoped to ſee the young lady in the morning; when I would apologize to her for my particularity. And then Mrs. Sinclair heſitating and moving towards the door, (though ſhe turned round to me again) I deſired her *(lighting her)* to take care how ſhe went down.

'Pray, Madam,' ſaid ſhe, on the ſtairs head, 'don't give yourſelf all 'this trouble. God knows my heart, 'I meant no affront: but, ſince you 'ſeem to take my freedom amiſs, I 'beg you will not acquaint Mr. Love-'lace with it; for he perhaps will think 'me bold and impertinent.'

Now, my dear, is not this a particular incident: either as I have made it, or as it was deſigned? I don't love to do an uncivil thing. And if nothing were meant by the requeſt, my refuſal

deſerves to be called uncivil. Then I have ſhewn a ſuſpicion of foul uſage by it, which ſurely dare not be meant. If *juſt*, I ought to apprehend every-thing, and fly the houſe and the man as I would an infection. If *not juſt*, and if I cannot contrive to clear myſelf of having entertained ſuſpicions, by aſſigning ſome other plauſible reaſon for my denial, the very *ſtaying here* will have an appearance not at all reputable to myſelf.

I am now out of humour with him, with myſelf, with all the world, but you. His companions are ſhocking creatures. Why, again I repeat, ſhould he have been deſirous to bring me into ſuch company? Once more, I like him not. Indeed I do not like him!

LETTER LXVII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

TUESDAY, MAY 2.

WITH infinite regret I am obliged to tell you, that I can no longer write to you, or receive letters from you. Your mother has ſent me a letter incloſed in a cover to Mr. Lovelace, directed for him at Lord M.'s, (and which was brought him juſt now) reproaching me on this ſubject in very angry terms, and forbidding me, as I would not be thought to intend to make her and you unhappy, to write to you without her leave.

This, therefore, is the laſt you muſt receive from me, till happier days: and as my proſpects are not very bad, I preſume we ſhall ſoon have leave to write again; and even to ſee each other: ſince an alliance with a family ſo honourable as Mr. Lovelace's is, will not be a diſgrace.

She is pleaſed to write, that if I would wiſh to *inflame* you, I ſhould let you know her written prohibition: but if otherwiſe, find ſome way of my own accord (without bringing *her* into the queſtion) to decline a correſpondence, which I muſt know ſhe has for ſome time paſt forbidden. But all I can ſay is, to beg of you *not* to be inflamed;—to beg of you, not to let her *know*, or even by your behaviour to her, on this occaſion, *gueſs*, that I have acquainted you with my reaſon for declining to write to you. For how elſe, after the ſcruples I have heretofore made on this very ſubject, yet proceeding to correſpond, can I honeſtly ſatisfy you about my motives for this ſudden ſtop? So, my dear, I chuſe, you ſee, rather to rely upon your diſcretion, than to feign reaſons with which you would not be ſatisfied, but, with your uſual active penetration, ſift to the bottom, and at laſt find me to be a mean and low qualifier; and that with an implication injurious to you, that I ſuppoſed you had not prudence enough to be truſted with the naked truth.

I repeat, that my proſpects are not bad. The houſe, I preſume, will ſoon be taken. The people here are very reſpectful, notwithſtanding my nicety about Miſs Partington. Miſs Martin, who is near marriage with an eminent tradeſman in the Strand, juſt now, in a very reſpectful manner, aſked my opinion of ſome patterns of rich ſilks for the occaſion. The widow has a leſs forbidding appearance than at firſt. Mr. Lovelace, on my declared diſlike of his four friends, has aſſured me, that neither they nor any-body elſe ſhall be introduced to me, without my leave.

Theſe circumſtances I mention, (as you will ſuppoſe) that your kind heart may be at eaſe about me; that you may be induced by them to acquieſce with your mother's commands, (*chearfully* acquieſce) and that for *my ſake*, leſt I ſhould be thought an *inflamer*; who am, with very contrary intentions, my deareſt and beſt-beloved friend, *your ever-obliged and affectionate*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LETTER LXVIII.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

WEDN. MAY 3.

I Am aſtoniſhed that my mother ſhould take ſuch a ſtep—purely to exerciſe an unreaſonable act of authority; and to oblige the moſt remorſeleſs hearts in the world. If I find, that I can be of uſe to you either by advice or information, do you think I will not give it?—Were it to any other perſon, much *leſs* dear to me than you are, do you think, in ſuch a caſe, I would forbear giving it?

Mr. Hickman, who pretends to a little

tle caſuiſtry in ſuch a nice matter, is of opinion, that I ought not to decline a correſpondence thus circumſtanced. And 'tis well he is: for my mother having ſet me up, I muſt have ſomebody to quarrel with.

This I will come into, if it will make you eaſy—I will forbear to write to *you* for a few days, if nothing extraordinary happen, and till the rigour of her prohibition is abated. But be aſſured, that I will not diſpenſe with your writing to *me*. My heart, my conſcience, my honour, will not permit it.

But how will I help myſelf?—How!—Eaſily enough. For I do aſſure you, that I want but very little further provocation to fly privately to London. And if I do, I will not leave you till I ſee you either honourably married, or abſolutely quit of the wretch: and in this laſt caſe I will take you down with me, in defiance of the whole world: or, if you refuſe to go with me, ſtay with you, and accompany you as your ſhadow whitherſoever you go.

Don't be frighted at this declaration. There is but one conſideration, and but one hope, that withold me, watched as I am in all my retirements; obliged to read to her without a voice; to work in her preſence without fingers; and to lie with her every night againſt my will. The *conſideration* is, Leſt you ſhould apprehend that a ſtep of this nature would look like a doubling of your fault, in the eyes of ſuch as think your going away a fault. The *hope* is, That things will ſtill end happily, and that ſome people will have reaſon to take ſhame to themſelves for the ſorry parts they have acted. Nevertheleſs I am often balancing—But your reſolving to give up the correſpondence at this criſis, will turn the ſcale. *Write* therefore, or *take the conſequence*.

A few words upon the ſubject of your laſt letters—I know not whether your brother's wife project be given up or not. A dead ſilence reigns in your family. Your brother was abſent three days; then at home one; and is now abſent: but whether with Singleton or not, I cannot find out.

By your account of your wretch's companions, I ſee not but they are a ſet of *infernals*, and he the *Beelzebub*. What could he mean, as you ſay, by his earneſtneſs to bring you into ſuch company, and to give you ſuch an opportunity to make him and them reflecting-glaſſes to one another? The man's a *fool*, to be ſure, my dear—A *ſilly fellow*, at leaſt—The wretches muſt put on their *beſt* before you, no doubt—Lords of the creation!—Noble fellows theſe!—Yet who knows how many poor deſpicable ſouls of our ſex the worſt of them has had to whine after him!

You have brought an inconvenience upon yourſelf as you obſerve, by your refuſal of Miſs Partington for your bedfellow. Pity you had not admitted her! Watchful as *you* are, what *could* have happened? If violence were intended, he would not ſtay for the *night*. You might have ſat up after her, or not gone to bed. Mrs. Sinclair preſſed it too far. You was over-ſcrupulous.

If any-thing happen to delay your nuptials, I would adviſe you to remove: but if you marry, perhaps you may think it no great matter to ſtay where you are, till you take poſſeſſion of your own eſtate. The knot once tied, and with ſo reſolute a man, it is my opinion, your relations will ſoon reſign what they cannot legally hold: and, were even a litigation to follow, you will not be *able*, nor ought you to be *willing*, to help it: for your eſtate will then be his right; and it will be unjuſt to wiſh it to be witheld from him.

One thing I would adviſe you to think of; and that is, of proper ſettlements: it will be to the credit of your prudence and of his juſtice, (and the more as matters ſtand) that ſomething of this ſhould be done before you marry. Bad as he is, nobody accounts him a fordid man. And I wonder he has been hitherto ſilent on that ſubject.

I am not diſpleaſed with his propoſal about the widow-lady's houſe. I think it will do very well. But if it muſt be three weeks before you can be certain about it, ſurely you need not put off his day for that ſpace: and he may beſpeak his equipages. Surprizing to me, as well as to you, that he could be ſo acquieſcent!

I repeat—Continue to write to me. I inſiſt upon it; and that as minutely as poſſible: or, take the conſequence. I ſend this by a particular hand. I am, and ever will be, *your moſt affectionate*

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER LXIX.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

THURSDAY, MAY 4.

I Forego every other engagement, I ſuſpend every wiſh, I baniſh every other fear, to take up my pen, to beg of you, that you will not think of being *guilty* of ſuch an act of love as I can never thank you for; but muſt for ever regret. If I *muſt* continue to write to you, I muſt. I know full well your impatience of controul, when you have the leaſt imagination that your generoſity or friendſhip is likely to be wounded by it.

My deareſt, deareſt creature, would you incur a maternal, as I have a paternal, malediction? Would not the world think there was an infection in my fault, if it were followed by Miſs Howe? There are ſome points ſo flagrantly wrong, that they will not bear to be argued upon. This is one of them. I need *not* give reaſons againſt ſuch a raſhneſs. Heaven forbid that it ſhould be known that you had it but once in your *thought*, be your motives ever ſo noble and generous, to follow ſo bad an example; the rather, as that you would, in ſuch a caſe, want the extenuations that might be pleaded in my favour; and particularly that one of being *ſurprized* into the unhappy ſtep!

The reſtraint your mother lays you under, would not have appeared heavy to you, but on my account. Would you have once thought it a hardſhip to be admitted to a part of her bed?—How did I uſe to be delighted with ſuch a favour, from *my* mother!—How did I love to work in her preſence!—So did you in the preſence of yours once. And to read to her in winter evenings I know was one of your joys.—Do not give me cauſe to reproach *myſelf* on the reaſon that may be aſſigned for the change in *you*.

Learn, my dear, I beſeech you learn, to ſubdue your own paſſions. Be the motives what they will, exceſs is exceſs. Thoſe paſſions in our ſex, which we take no pains to ſubdue, may have one and the ſame ſource with thoſe infinitely blacker paſſions, which we uſed ſo often to condemn in the violent and headſtrong of the other ſex; and which may be only heightened in *them* by *cuſtom*, and their *freer education*. Let us both, my dear, ponder well this thought; look into ourſelves, and fear.

If I write, as I find I muſt, I inſiſt upon *your* forbearing to write. Your ſilence to *this* ſhall be the ſign to me, that you will not think of the raſhneſs you threaten me with; and that you will obey your mother as to *your own* part of the correſpondence, however eſpecially as you can inform or adviſe me in every weighty caſe by Mr. Hickman's pen.

My trembling writing will ſhew you, my dear impetuous creature, what a trembling heart you have given to *your ever-obliged*, or, if you take ſo raſh a ſtep, *your for-ever diſobliged*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

My cloaths were brought to me juſt now. But you have ſo much diſcompoſed me, that I have no heart to look into the trunks. Why, why, my dear, will you fright me with your flaming love? Diſcompoſure gives diſtreſs to a weak heart, whether it ariſe from friendſhip or enmity.

A ſervant of Mr. Lovelace carries this to Mr. Hickman for diſpatch-ſake. Let that worthy man's pen relieve my heart from this new uneaſineſs.

LETTER LXX.

MR. HICKMAN, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

[SENT TO WILSON'S BY A PARTICULAR HAND.]

FRIDAY, MAY 5.

MADAM,

I Have the honour of dear Miſs Howe's commands, to acquaint you, without knowing the occaſion, That ſhe is exceſſively concerned for the concern ſhe has given you in her laſt letter: and that, if you will but write to her, under cover as before, ſhe will have no thoughts of what you are ſo very apprehenſive about.—Yet ſhe bid me write, That if ſhe has but the *leaſt* imagination that ſhe can *ſerve* you, and *ſave* you, thoſe are her words, all the cenſures of the world will be but of ſecond

ſecond conſideration with her. I have great temptations, on this occaſion, to expreſs my own reſentments upon your preſent ſtate; but not being fully apprized of what that is—only conjecturing from the diſturbance upon the mind of the deareſt lady in the world to me, and the moſt ſincere of friends to you, that *that* is not altogether ſo happy as were to be wiſhed; and being, moreover, forbid to enter into the cruel ſubject; I can only offer, *as I do*, my beſt and faithfulleſt ſervices! and wiſh you a happy deliverance from all your troubles. For I am, *moſt excellent young lady, your faithful and moſt obedient ſervant*,

CH. HICKMAN.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

THE

HISTORY

OF

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

VOLUME THE FOURTH.

LETTER I.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

TUESDAY, MAY 2.

MERCURY, as the fabuliſt tells us, having the curioſity to know the eſtimation he ſtood in among mortals, deſcended in diſguiſe, and in a ſtatuary's ſhop cheapened a Jupiter, then a Juno, then one, then another, of the *Dii majores*; and, at laſt, aſked, What price that ſame ſtatue of *Mercury* bore? 'O 'Sir,' ſays the artiſt, 'buy one of the 'others, and I'll throw you in that for 'nothing.'

How ſheepiſh muſt the god of thieves look upon this rebuff to his vanity!

So thou! a thouſand pounds wouldſt thou give for the good opinion of this ſingle lady—To be only thought tolerably of, and not quite unworthy of her converſation, would make thee happy. And at parting laſt night, or rather this morning, thou madeſt me promiſe a few lines to Edgware, to let thee know what ſhe thinks of thee, and of thy brethren.

Thy thouſand pounds, Jack, is all thy own: for moſt heartily does ſhe diſlike ye all—Thee as much as any of the reſt.

I am ſorry for it too, as to thy part; for two reaſons—*One*, that I think thy motive for thy curioſity was fear or conſciouſneſs: whereas that of the arch-thief was vanity, intolerable vanity. And he was therefore juſtly ſent away with a bluſh upon his cheeks to Heaven, and could not brag—The *other*, that I am afraid, if ſhe diſlikes *thee*, ſhe diſlikes *me*: for are we not birds of a feather?

I muſt never talk of reformation, ſhe told me, having ſuch companions, and taking ſuch delight, as I ſeemed to take, in their frothy converſation.

I, no more than you, Jack, imagined ſhe could poſſibly like ye: but then, as *my* friends, I thought a perſon of her education would have been more ſparing of her cenſures.

I don't know how it is, Belford; but women think themſelves entitled to take any freedoms with us, while we are unpolite, forſooth, and I can't tell what, if we don't tell a pack of curſed lies, and make black white, in *their* favour—teaching us to be hypocrites, yet ſtigmatizing us, at other times, for deceivers.

I defended ye all as well as I could: but you know there was no attempting ought but a palliative defence, to one of her principles.

I will ſummarily give thee a few of my pleas.

To

To the *pure*, every little deviation seemed offensive: yet I saw not, that there was any-thing amiss the whole evening, either in the words or behaviour of any of my friends. Some people could talk but upon *one* or *two* subjects: she upon *every one*. No wonder, therefore, *they* talked to what they understood best; and to mere objects of sense. Had she honoured us with more of *her* conversation, she would have been less disgusted with *ours*; for she saw how every-one was prepared to admire her, whenever she opened her lips. You, in particular, had said, when she retired, that virtue itself spoke when she spoke: but that you had such an awe upon you, after she had favoured us with an observation or two on a subject started, that you should ever be afraid in her company, to be found *most* exceptionable, when you intended to be *least* so.

Plainly, she said, she neither liked my companions, nor the house she was in.

I liked not the house any more than she: though the people were very obliging, and she had owned they were less exceptionable to herself, than at first. And were we not about another of our own?

She did not like Miss Partington—Let her fortune be what it would, and she had heard a great deal said of her fortune, she should not chuse an intimacy with her. She thought it was a hardship to be put upon such a difficulty as she was put upon the preceding night, when there were lodgers in the front-house, whom they had reason to be freer with, than, upon so short an acquaintance, with her.

I pretended to be an utter stranger as to this particular; and, when she explained herself upon it, condemned Mrs. Sinclair's request, and called it a confident one.

She, *artfully*, made lighter of her denial of the girl for a bed-fellow, than she *thought* of it, I could see that; for it was plain, she supposed there was room for me to think she had been either *over-nice*, or *over-cautious*.

I offered to resent Mrs. Sinclair's freedom.

No; there was no great matter in it. It was best to let it pass. It might be thought more particular in her to deny such a request, than in Mrs. Sinclair to make it, or in Miss Partington to expect it to be complied with. But as the people below had a large acquaintance, she did not know how often she might have her retirements invaded, if she gave way. And indeed, there were levities in the behaviour of that young lady, which she could not so far pass over as to wish an intimacy with her.

I said, I liked Miss Partington as little as *she* could. Miss Partington was a silly young creature; who seemed too likely to justify the watchfulness of her guardians over her.—But, nevertheless, as to her general conversation and behaviour last night, I must own, that I thought the girl (for *girl* she was, as to discretion) not exceptionable; only carrying herself like a free good-natured creature who believed herself secure in the honour of her company.

It was very well said of me, she replied: but, if that young lady were so well satisfied with her company, she must needs say, that I was very kind to suppose her such an *innocent*—For her own part, she had seen nothing of the London world: but thought, she must tell me plainly, that she never was in such company in her life; nor ever again wished to be in such.

There, Belford!—Worse off than Mercury!—Art thou not?

I was nettled. Hard would be the lot of *more* discreet women, as far as I knew, than Miss Partington, were they to be judged by so rigid a virtue as hers.

Not so, she said: but if I really saw nothing exceptionable to a virtuous mind, in that young person's behaviour, my ignorance of *better* behaviour was, she must needs tell me, as pitiable as *hers*. And it were to be wished, that minds *so* paired, for their own sakes, should never be separated.

See, Jack, what I get by my charity!

I thanked her heartily. But said, that I must take the liberty to observe, that good folks were generally so uncharitable, that, devil take me, if I would chuse to be good, were the consequence to be, that I must think hardly of the whole world besides.

She congratulated me upon my charity; but told me, that to *enlarge her own*, she hoped it would not be expected

pected of her to approve of the *low company* I had brought her into last night.

No exception for thee, Belford!—Safe is thy thousand pounds.

I saw not, I said, begging her pardon, that she liked *any-body*. [*Plain-dealing for plain-dealing, Jack!—Why then did she abuse my friends?*] However, let me but know whom and what she did or did not like; and, if possible, I would like and dislike the very same persons and things.

She bid me then, in a pet, *dislike myself*.

Cursed severe!—Does she think she must not pay for it one day, or one night?—And if one, many; that's my comfort.

I was in such a train of being happy, I said, before my earnestness to procure her to favour my friends with her company, that I wished the devil had had as well my friends as Miss Partington—And yet I must say, that I saw not how good people could answer half their end, which is to reform the wicked by precept as well as example, were they to accompany *only* with the good.

I had like to have been blasted by two or three flashes of lightning from her indignant eyes; and she turned scornfully from me, and retired to her own apartment.

Once more, Jack, safe, as thou seest, is thy thousand pounds.

She says, I am not a polite man: but is she, in the instance before us, more polite for a woman?

And now, dost thou not think, that I owe my charmer some revenge for her cruelty in obliging such a fine young creature, and so vast a fortune, as Miss Partington, to croud into a press-bed with Dorcas the maid-servant of the proud refuser?—Miss Partington too (with tears) declared by Mrs. Sinclair, that would Mrs. Lovelace do her the honour of a visit at Barnet, the best bed and best room in her guardian's house should be at her service. Thinkest thou, that I could not guess at her dishonourable fears of me?—That she apprehended, that the supposed *husband* would endeavour to take possession of *his own?*—And that Miss Partington would be willing to contribute to such a piece of justice?

Thus, then, thou both remindest, and defiest me, charmer!—And since thou reliest more on thy own precaution than upon my honour; be it unto thee, fair-one, as thou apprehendest!

And now, Jack, let me know, what thy opinion, and the opinions of thy brother varlets, are of my Gloriana.

I have just now heard, that Hannah hopes to be soon well enough to attend her young lady, when in London. It seems the girl has had no physician. I must send her one, out of pure love and respect to her mistress. Who knows but medicine may *weaken* nature, and *strengthen* the disease?—As her malady is not a *fever*, very likely it may do so.—But perhaps the wench's hopes are too forward. *Blustering weather in this month yet.*—And that is bad for rheumatick complaints.

LETTER II.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

TUESDAY, MAY 2.

JUST as I had sealed up the inclosed, comes a letter to my beloved, in a cover to me, directed to Lord M.'s. From whom, thinkest thou?—From Mrs. Howe!

'And what the contents?'

How should I know, unless the dear creature had communicated them to me? But a very cruel letter I believe it is, *by the effect it had upon her.* The tears ran down her cheeks as she read it; and her colour changed several times. No end of her persecutions, I think!

'What a cruelty in my fate!' said the sweet lamenter.—'Now the *only* 'comfort of my life must be given 'up!'

Miss Howe's correspondence, no doubt.

But *should* she be so much grieved at this? This correspondence was prohibited before, and that, to the *daughter*, in the strongest terms: but yet carried on by *both*; although *a brace of impeccables*, an't please ye. Could they expect, that a mother would not vindicate her authority?—and finding her prohibition ineffectual with her perverse *daughter*, was it not reason-

able to suppose she would try what effect it would have upon her *daughter's friend?*—And now I believe the end will be effectually answered: for my beloved, I dare say, will make a point of conscience of it.

I hate cruelty, especially in *women*; and should have been more concerned for this instance of it in Mrs. Howe, had I not had a stronger instance of the same in my beloved to Miss Partington; for how did she know, since she was so much afraid for *herself*, whom Dorcas might let in, to that innocent and *less watchful* young lady? But nevertheless I must needs own, that I am not very sorry for this prohibition, let it *originally* come from the *Harlowes*, or *from whom it will*; because I make no doubt, that it is owing to Miss Howe, in a great measure, that my beloved is so much upon her guard, and thinks so hardly of me. And who can tell, *as characters here are so tender*, and *some disguises so flimsy*, what consequences might follow this undutiful correspondence?—I say, therefore, I am not sorry for it: now will she not have any-body to compare notes with; any-body to alarm her; and I may be saved the guilt and disobligation of inspecting into a correspondence that has long made me uneasy.

How every-thing works for me!—Why will this charming creature make *such contrivances* necessary, as will increase my trouble, and my guilt too, as some will account it? But why, rather I should ask, will she fight against her stars?

LETTER III.

MR. BELFORD, TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

EDGWARE, TUESDAY NIGHT, MAY 2.

WITHOUT staying for the promised letter from you to inform us what the lady says of *us*, I write to tell you, that we are all of *one* opinion with regard to *her*; which is, that there is not of her age a finer woman in the world, as to her understanding. As for her person, she is at the age of bloom, and an admirable creature; a perfect beauty: but this *poorer* praise, a man, who has been honoured with her conversation, can hardly descend to give; and yet she was brought amongst us contrary to her will.

Permit me, dear Lovelace, to be a means of saving this excellent creature from the dangers she hourly runs from the most plotting heart in the world. In a former, I pleaded your own family, Lord M.'s wishes particularly; and then I had not seen her: but now, I join *her* sake, *honour's* sake, motives of justice, generosity, gratitude, and humanity, which are all concerned in the preservation of so fine a woman. Thou knowest not the anguish I should have had (whence arising, I cannot devise) had I not known before I set out this morning, that the incomparable creature had disappointed thee in thy cursed view of getting her to admit the specious Partington for a bedfellow.

I have done nothing but talk of this lady ever since I saw her. There is something *so awful*, and yet *so sweet*, in her aspect, that were I to have the virtues and the graces all drawn in one piece, they should be taken, every one of them, from different airs and attributes in her. She was born to adorn the age she was given to, and would be an ornament to the first dignity. What a piercing, yet gentle eye; every glance, I thought, mingled with love and fear of you! What a sweet smile darting through the cloud that overspread her fair face, demonstrating that she had more apprehensions and grief at her heart, than she cared to express!

You may think what I am going to write too flighty; but, by my faith, I have conceived such a profound reverence for her sense and judgment, that, far from thinking the man excusable who should treat her basely, I am ready to regret that such an angel of a woman should even marry. She is in my eye all mind: and were she to meet with a man all mind likewise, why should the charming qualities she is mistress of, be endangered? Why should such an angel be plunged so low as into the vulgar offices of domestick life? Were she mine, I should hardly wish to see her a mother, unless there were a kind of moral certainty, that minds like hers could be propagated. For why, in short, should not the work of bodies be left to *mere* bodies? I know, that you yourself have an opinion of her little

little leſs exalted. Belton, Mowbray, Tourville, are all of my mind; are full of her praiſes; and ſwear, it would be a million of pities to ruin a woman in whoſe fall none but devils can rejoice.

What muſt that merit and excellence be which can extort this from *us*, free livers, like yourſelf, and all of us your partial friends, who have joined with you in your juſt reſentments againſt the reſt of her family, and offered our aſſiſtance to execute your vengeance on them? But we cannot think it reaſonable, that you ſhould puniſh an innocent creature, who loves you ſo well, and who is in your protection, and has ſuffered ſo much for you, for the faults of her relations.

And here let me put a ſerious queſtion or two. Thinkeſt thou, truly admirable as this lady is, that the *end* thou propoſeſt to thyſelf, if obtained, is anſwerable to the *means*, to the trouble thou giveſt thyſelf, and to the perfidies, tricks, ſtratagems, and contrivances, thou haſt already been guilty of, and ſtill meditateſt? In every real excellence ſhe ſurpaſſes all her ſex. But in the article thou ſeekeſt to ſubdue her for, a mere ſenſualiſt, a Partington, a Horton, a Martin, would make a ſenſualiſt a thouſand times happier than ſhe either will or can.

'Sweet are the joys that come with willing-
'neſs.'

And wouldſt thou make *her* unhappy for her whole life, and *thyſelf* not happy for a ſingle moment?

Hitherto, it is not too late; and that perhaps is as much as can be ſaid, if thou meaneſt to preſerve her eſteem and good opinion, as well as perſon; for I think it is impoſſible ſhe can get out of thy hands now ſhe is in this curſed houſe. O that damned hypocritical *Sinclair*, as thou calleſt her! How was it poſſible ſhe ſhould behave ſo ſpeciouſly as ſhe did all the time the lady ſtaid with us!—Be honeſt, and marry; and be thankful that ſhe will condeſcend to have thee. If thou doſt not, thou wilt be the worſt of men; and wilt be condemned in this world and the next: as I am ſure thou oughteſt, and ſhouldeſt too, wert thou to be judged by one, who never before was ſo much touched in a woman's favour; and whom thou knoweſt to be *thy partial friend*,

J. BELFORD.

Our companions conſented, that I ſhould withdraw to write to the above effect. They can make nothing of the characters we write in; ſo I read this to them. They approve of it; and of their own motion each man would ſet his name to it. I would not delay ſending it, for fear of ſome deteſtable ſcheme taking place.

THOMAS BELTON,
RICHARD MOWBRAY,
JAMES TOURVILLE.

Juſt now are brought me both yours. I vary not my opinion, nor forbear my earneſt prayers to you in her behalf, notwithſtanding her diſlike of me.

LETTER IV.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 3.

WHEN I have already taken pains to acquaint thee in full with regard to my views, deſigns, and reſolutions, with regard to this admirable woman, it is very extraordinary, that thou ſhouldſt vapour as thou doſt in her behalf, when I have made no trial, no attempt: and yet, giveſt it as thy opinion in a former letter, that advantage *may be* taken of the ſituation ſhe is in; and that ſhe *may be* overcome.

Moſt of thy reflections, particularly that which reſpects the difference as to the joys to be given by the virtuous and the libertine of her ſex, are fitter to come in as after-reflections, than as *antecedencies*.

I own with thee, and with the poet, *That ſweet are the joys that come with willingneſs*—But is it to be expected, that a *woman of education*, and a *lover of forms*, will yield before ſhe is attacked? And have I ſo much as ſummoned this to ſurrender? I doubt not but I ſhall meet with difficulty. I muſt

therefore make my firſt effort by ſurprize. There may poſſibly be ſome *cruelty* neceſſary: but there may be *conſent in ſtruggle*; there may be *yielding in reſiſtance*. But the firſt conflict over, whether the following may not be weaker and weaker, till *willingneſs* enſue, is the point to be tried. I will illuſtrate what I have ſaid by the ſimile of a bird new-caught. We begin, when boys, with birds; and when grown up, go on to women; and both perhaps, in turn, experience our ſportive cruelty.

Haſt thou not obſerved the charming gradations by which the enſnared volatile has been brought to bear with it's new condition? How, at firſt, refuſing all ſuſtenance, it beats and bruiſes itſelf againſt it's wires, till it makes it's gay plumage fly about, and overſpread it's well-ſecured cage. Now it gets out it's head; ſticking only at it's beautiful ſhoulders: then, with difficulty, drawing back it's head, it gaſps for breath, and erectly perched, with meditating eyes, firſt ſurveys, and then attempts, it's wired canopy. As it gets breath, with renewed rage, it beats and bruiſes again it's pretty head and ſides, bites the wires, and pecks at the fingers of it's delighted tamer. Till at laſt, finding it's efforts ineffectual, quite tired and breathleſs, it lays itſelf down, and pants at the bottom of the cage, ſeeming to bemoan it's cruel fate and forfeited liberty. And after a few days it's ſtruggles to eſcape ſtill diminiſhing as it finds it to no purpoſe to attempt it, it's new habitation becomes familiar; and it hops about from perch to perch, reſumes it's wonted chearfulneſs, and every day ſings a ſong to amuſe itſelf, and reward it's keeper.

Now, let me tell thee, that I have known a bird actually ſtarve itſelf, and die with grief, at it's being caught and caged. But never did I meet with a woman, who was ſo ſilly.—Yet I have heard the dear ſouls moſt vehemently threaten their own lives on ſuch an occaſion. But it is ſaying nothing in a woman's favour, if we do not allow her to have *more ſenſe than a bird*. And yet we muſt all own, that it is more difficult to catch a *bird* than a *lady*.

To purſue the compariſon—If the diſappointment of the captivated lady be very great, ſhe will threaten, indeed, as I ſaid: ſhe will even refuſe her ſuſtenance for ſome time, eſpecially if you entreat her much, and ſhe thinks ſhe gives you concern by her refuſal. But then the ſtomach of the dear ſullen one will ſoon return. 'Tis pretty to ſee how ſhe comes to by degrees: preſſed by appetite, ſhe will firſt ſteal, perhaps, a weeping morſel by herſelf; then be brought to piddle and ſigh, and ſigh and piddle, before you; now-and-then, if her viands be unſavoury, ſwallowing with them a reliſhing tear or two: then ſhe comes to eat and drink, to oblige you: then reſolves to live for your ſake: her exclamations will, in the next place, be turned into blandiſhments; her vehement upbraidings into gentle murmuring—'How *dare* you, traitor!'—into 'How *could* you, deareſt!' She will draw you to her, inſtead of puſhing you from her: no longer, with unſheathed claws, will ſhe reſiſt you; but, like a pretty, playful, wanton kitten, with gentle paws, and concealed talons, tap your cheek, and with intermingled ſmiles, and tears, and careſſes, implore your conſideration for her, and your *conſtancy*: all the favour ſhe then has to aſk of you!—And this is the time, were it given to man to confine himſelf to one object, to be happier every day than another.

Now, Belford, were I to go no farther than I have gone with my beloved Miſs Harlowe, how ſhall I know the difference between *her* and *another* bird? To let her fly now, what a pretty jeſt would that be!—How do I know, except I try, whether ſhe may not be brought to ſing me a fine ſong, and to be as well contented as I have brought other birds to be, and very ſhy ones too?

But now let us reflect a little upon the confounded partiality of us human creatures. I can give two or three familiar, and if they were *not familiar*, they would be *ſhocking*, inſtances of the cruelty both of men and women, with reſpect to other creatures, perhaps as worthy as (at leaſt more innocent than) themſelves. By my ſoul, Jack, there is more of the ſavage in human nature than we are commonly aware of. Nor is it, after all, ſo much amiſs, that we ſometimes avenge the more innocent animals upon our own ſpecies.

To particulars:

How uſual a thing is it for women, as well as men, without the leaſt remorſe, to enſnare, to cage, and torment, and

and even with burning knitting-needles to put out the eyes of the poor feathered ſongſter, [Thou ſeeſt I have not yet done with birds;] which, however, in proportion to it's bulk, has more life than themſelves, (for a bird is all ſoul;) and of conſequence has as much feeling as the human creature! When at the ſame time, if an honeſt fellow, by the gentleſt perſuaſion, and the ſofteſt arts, has the good luck to prevail upon a mewed-up lady, to countenance her own eſcape, and ſhe conſents to break cage, and be ſet a flying into the all-chearing air of liberty, mercy on us! what an outcry is generally raiſed againſt him!

Juſt like what you and I once ſaw raiſed in a paltry village near Chelmsford, after a poor hungry fox, who, watching his opportunity, had ſeized by the neck, and ſhouldered, a ſleek-feathered gooſe: at what time we beheld the whole vicinage of boys and girls, old men, and old women, all the furrows and wrinkles of the latter filled up with malice for the time; the old men armed with prongs, pitchforks, clubs, and catſticks; the old women with mops, brooms, fire-ſhovels, tongs, and pokers; and the younger fry with dirt, ſtones, and brick-bats, gathering as they ran like a ſnowball, in purſuit of the wind-out-ſtripping prowler; all the mongrel curs of the *circumjacencies* yelp, yelp, yelp, at their heels, compleating the horrid chorus.

Rememberеſt thou not this ſcene? Surely thou muſt. My imagination, inflamed by a tender ſympathy for the danger of the adventurous marauder, repreſents it to my eye, as if it were but yeſterday. And doſt thou not recollect how generouſly glad we were, as if our own caſe, that honeſt Reynard, by the help of a lucky ſtyle, over which both old and young tumbled upon one another, and a winding courſe, eſcaped their brutal fury, and flying catſticks; and how, in fancy, we followed him to his undiſcovered retreat; and imagined we beheld the intrepid thief enjoying his dear-earned purchaſe with a delight proportioned to his paſt danger?

I once made a charming little ſavage ſeverely repent the delight ſhe took in ſeeing her tabby favourite make cruel ſport with a pretty ſleek bead-eyed mouſe, before ſhe devoured it. 'Egad, 'my love,' ſaid I to myſelf, as I ſat meditating the ſcene, 'I am determined 'to lie in wait for a fit opportunity to 'try how *thou* wilt like to be toſt over 'my head, and be caught again: how '*thou* wilt like to be parted from me, 'and pulled to me. Yet will I rather 'give life than take it away, as this barbarous quadrupede has at laſt done by 'her prey.' And after all was over between my girl and me, I reminded her of the incident to which my reſolution was owing.

Nor had I at another time any mercy upon the daughter of an old epicure, who had taught the girl, without the leaſt remorſe, to roaſt lobſters alive; to cauſe a poor pig to be whipped to death; to ſcrape carp the contrary way of the ſcales, making them leap into the ſtew-pan, and dreſſing them in their own blood for ſauce. And this for luxury-ſake, and to provoke an appetite; which I had without ſtimulation, in my way, and that I can tell thee a very ravenous one.

Many more inſtances of the like nature could I give, were I to leave nothing to thyſelf, to ſhew that the beſt take the ſame liberties; and perhaps worſe, with ſome ſort of creatures, that we take with others; all *creatures* ſtill! and creatures too, as I have obſerved above, replete with ſtrong life, and ſenſible feeling!—If, therefore, people pretend to mercy, let mercy go through all their actions. I have read ſomewhere, *That a merciful man is merciful to his beaſt.*

So much at preſent for thoſe parts of thy letter in which thou urgeſt to me motives of compaſſion for the lady.

But I gueſs at thy principal motive in this thy earneſtneſs in behalf of this charming creature. I know that thou correſpondeſt with Lord M. who is impatient, and has long been deſirous, to ſee me ſhackled. And thou wanteſt to make a merit with the uncle, with a view to one of his nieces. But knoweſt thou not, that *my conſent* will be wanting to compleat thy wiſhes?—And what a commendation will it be of thee to ſuch a girl as Charlotte, when I ſhall acquaint her with the affront thou putteſt upon the whole ſex, by aſking, *Whether I think my reward, when I have ſubdued the moſt charming woman in the world, will be equal to my trouble?*—Which, thinkeſt thou, will a woman of ſpirit ſooneſt forgive; the undervaluing varlet

varlet who *can put such a question*; or him, who *prefers the pursuit and conquest of a fine woman to all the joys of life?* Have I not known even *a virtuous woman*, as she would be thought, vow everlasting antipathy to a man who gave out, that she was *too old for him to attempt?* And did not Essex's personal reflection on Queen Elizabeth, that she was *old and crooked*, contribute more to his ruin, than his treason?

But another word or two, as to thy objection relating to my trouble and reward.

Does not the keen fox-hunter endanger his neck and his bones in pursuit of a vermin, which, when killed, is neither fit food for men nor dogs?

Do not the hunters of the noble game value the venison less than the sport?

Why then should I be reflected upon, and the sex affronted, for my patience and perseverance in the most noble of all chaces; and for not being a poacher in love, as thy question may be *made to imply?*

Learn of thy master, for the future, to treat more respectfully a sex that yields us our principal diversions and delights.

Proceed anon.

LETTER V.

MR. LOVELACE. IN CONTINUATION.

WELL sayest thou, that mine is the *most plotting heart in the world.* Thou dost me honour; and I thank thee heartily. Thou art no bad judge. How like Boileau's parson, I strut behind my double chin! Am I not obliged to deserve thy compliment? And wouldst thou have me repent of a murder before I have committed it?

'The Virtues and the Graces are this 'lady's handmaids. She was certainly 'born to adorn the age she was given 'to.'—Well said, Jack—'And would 'be an ornament to the first dignity.' But what praise is that, unless the first dignity were adorned with the first merit?—Dignity! gewgaw!—*First dignity!* thou ideot!—Art thou, who knowest *me*, so taken with ermine and tinsel?—I, who have won the gold, am only fit to wear it. For the future, therefore, correct thy stile, and proclaim her the ornament of the happiest man, and (respecting herself and sex) the greatest conqueror in the world.

Then, that she *loves me*, as thou imaginest, by no means appears clear to me. Her conditional offers to renounce me; the little confidence she places in me; entitle me to ask, What merit can she have with a man, who won her in spite of herself; and who fairly, in set and obstinate battle, took her prisoner?

As to what thou inferrest from her *eye* when with us, thou knowest nothing of her *heart* from that, if thou imaginest there was one glance of love shot from it. Well did I note her eye, and plainly did I see, that it was all but just civil disgust to me and to the company I had brought her into. Her early retiring that night, against all entreaty, might have convinced thee, that there was very little of the gentle in her heart for me. And her eye never knew what it was to contradict her heart.

She is, thou sayest, *all mind.* So say I. But why shouldst thou imagine, that such a mind as hers, meeting with such a one as mine; and, to dwell upon the word, *meeting* with an inclination in hers; should not propagate minds like her own?

Were I to take thy stupid advice, and marry; what a figure should I make in rakish annals! The lady in my power: yet not having *intended* to put herself in my power; declaring against love, and a rebel to it: so much open-eyed caution: no confidence in my honour: her family expecting the worst *hath* passed; herself seeming to expect, that the worst *will* be attempted: [Priscilla Partington for that!] What! wouldst thou not have me act in character?

But why callest thou the lady *innocent?* And why sayest thou *she loves me?*

By *innocent*, with regard to me, and not taken as a general character, I must insist upon it, she is *not* innocent. Can *she* be innocent, who, by wishing to shackle me in the prime and glory of my youth, with such a capacity as I have for noble mischief*, would make my perdition more certain, were I to break, as I doubt I should, the most solemn vow I could make? I say no man

* See Vol. III. Letter XIX. Parag. 4.

ought

ought to take even a common oath, who thinks he cannot keep it. This is conscience! This is honour!—And when I think I can keep the marriage-vow, then will it be time to marry.

No doubt of it, as thou sayest, the devils would rejoice in the fall of such a woman. But this is my confidence, that I shall have it in my power to marry when I will. And if I do her this *justice*, shall I not have a claim to her *gratitude?* And will she not think herself the obliged, rather than the obliger? Then let me tell thee, Belford, it is impossible so far to hurt the *morals of this lady*, as thou and thy brother-varlets have hurt others of the sex, who now are casting about the town firebrands and double death. Take ye that thistle to mumble upon.

* *

A SHORT interruption. I now resume.

That the morals of this lady cannot fail, is a consideration that will lessen the guilt on both sides. And if, when subdued, she knows but how to middle the matter between virtue and love, then will she be a wife for me: for already I am convinced, that there is not a woman in the world that is love-proof and plot-proof, if she be not the person.

And now imagine (the charmer overcome) thou seest me sitting supinely cross-kneed, reclining on my sofa, the God of Love dancing in my eyes, and rejoicing in every mantling feature; the sweet rogue, late such a proud rogue, wholly in my power, moving up slowly to me, at my beck, with heaving sighs, half-pronounced upbraidings from murmuring lips, her finger in her eye, and quickening her pace at my '*Come* '*hither, dearest!*'

One hand stuck in my side, the other extended to encourage her bashful approach—'*Kiss me, love!*—"*Sweet,*" as Jack Belford says, "*are the joys that* "*come with willingness.*"

She tenders her purple mouth, [Her coral lips will be purple then, Jack!] 'Sigh not so deeply, my beloved!— 'Happier hours await thy humble love, 'than did thy proud resistance.'

Once more bent to my ardent lips the swanny glossiness of a neck late so stately—

'There's my precious!

'Again!

'Obliging loveliness!

'O my ever-blooming glory! I have 'tried thee enough. To-morrow's 'sun——'

Then I rise, and fold to my almost-talking heart the throbbing-bosomed charmer.

'And now shall thy humble pride 'confess it's obligation to me!'

'To-morrow's sun——' And then I disengage myself from the bashful passive, and stalk about the room—'To-morrow's sun shall gild the al-'tar at which my vows shall be paid 'thee!'

Then, Jack, the rapture! then the darted sun-beams from her gladdened eye, drinking up, at one sip, the precious distillation from the pearl-dropped cheek! Then hands ardently folded, eyes seeming to pronounce, 'God bless 'my Lovelace!' to supply the joy-locked tongue: her transports too strong, and expression too weak, to give utterance to her grateful meanings!—All—All the studies—All the studies of her future life vowed and devoted (when she can speak) to acknowledge and return the perpetuated obligation!

If I could bring my charmer to this, would it not be the eligible of eligibles?—Is it not worth trying for?—As I said, I can marry her when I will. She *can* be nobody's but mine, neither for shame, nor by choice, nor yet by address: for who, that knows my character, believes that the worst she dreads, is *now* to be dreaded?

I have the highest opinion that man can have (thou knowest I have) of the merit and perfections of this admirable woman; of her virtue and honour too, although thou, in a former, art of opinion, that she *may be overcome**. Am I not, therefore, obliged to go further, in order to contradict thee, and, as I have often urged, to be *sure*, that she is what I really think her to be, and, if I am ever to marry her, hope to find her?

Then this lady is a mistress of our passions: no one ever had to so much perfection the art of moving. This all her family know, and have equally feared and revered her for it. This I know too; and doubt not more and more to

* See Vol. III. Letter XLVII. Parag. 9.

experience.

experience. How charmingly muſt this divine creature warble forth (if a proper occaſion be given) her melodious elegiacks!—Infinite beauties are there in a weeping eye. I firſt taught the two nymphs below to diſtinguiſh the ſeveral accents of the *lamentable* in a new ſubject, and how admirably ſome, more than others, become their diſtreſſes!

But to return to thy objections—Thou wilt perhaps tell me, in the names of thy brethren, as well as in thy own name, That among all the objects of your reſpective attempts, there was not one of the rank and merit of my charming Miſs Harlowe.

But let me aſk, Has it not been a conſtant maxim with us, that the greater the *merit* on the woman's ſide, the nobler the victory on the man's? And as to *rank*, ſenſe of honour, ſenſe of ſhame, pride of family, may make rifled rank get up, and ſhake itſelf to rights: and if any-thing come of it, ſuch a one may ſuffer only in her pride, by being obliged to take up with a ſecond-rate match inſtead of a firſt; and, as it may fall out, be the *happier*, as well as the more *uſeful*, for the miſadventure; ſince (taken off of her publick gaddings, and *domeſticated* by her diſgrace) ſhe will have reaſon to think herſelf obliged to the man who has ſaved her from *further reproach*; while *her* fortune and alliance will lay an obligation upon *him*; and her paſt fall, if ſhe have prudence and conſciouſneſs, will be his preſent and future ſecurity.

But a *poor* girl, [ſuch a one as my *Roſebud*, for inſtance] having no recals from education; being driven out of every family that pretends to reputation; perſecuted moſt perhaps by ſuch as have only kept their ſecret better; and having no refuge to fly to—The common, the ſtews, the ſtreet, is the fate of ſuch a poor wretch; penury, want, and diſeaſe, her ſure attendants; and an untimely end, perhaps, cloſes the miſerable ſcene.

And will you not now all join to ſay, that it is more manly to attack a lion than a ſheep?—Thou knoweſt, that I always illuſtrated my eagleſhip, by aiming at the nobleſt quarries; and by diſdaining to make a ſtoop at wrens, phyl-tits *, and wag-tails.

The worſt reſpecting myſelf, in the caſe before me, is that my triumph, when compleated, will be ſo glorious a one, that I ſhall never be able to keep up to it. All my future attempts muſt be poor to this. I ſhall be as unhappy, after a while, from my reflections upon this conqueſt, as Don John of Auſtria was, in his, on the renowned victory of Lepanto, when he found that none of his future atchievements could keep pace with his early glory.

I am ſenſible that my pleas and my reaſoning may be eaſily anſwered, and perhaps juſtly cenſured; but by whom cenſured? Not by any of the confraternity, whoſe conſtant courſe of life, even long before I became your general, to this hour, has juſtified what ye now in a fit of ſqueamiſhneſs, and through envy, condemn. Having therefore vindicated myſelf and my intentions to YOU, that is all I am at preſent concerned for.

Be convinced then, that *I* (according to *our* principles) am right, *thou* wrong; or, at leaſt, be ſilent. But I *command thee to be convinced*. And in thy next, be ſure to tell me that thou art.

LETTER VI.

MR. BELFORD, TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

EDGWARE, THURSDAY, MAY 4.

I Know that thou art ſo abandoned a man, that to give thee the beſt reaſons in the world againſt what thou haſt once reſolved upon, will be but acting the madman whom once we ſaw trying to buffet down a hurricane with his hat. I hope, however, that the lady's merit will ſtill avail her with thee. But if thou perſiſteſt; if thou wilt avenge thyſelf on this ſweet lamb which thou haſt ſingled out from a flock thou hateſt, for the faults of the dogs who kept it; if thou art not to be moved by beauty, by learn-

* *Phyl-tits*, q. d. *Phyllis-tits*, in oppoſition to *Tom-tits*. It needs not now be obſerved, that Mr. Lovelace, in the wanton gaiety of his heart, often takes liberties of coining words and phraſes in his letters to this his familiar friend. See his ludicrous reaſon for it in Vol. III. Letter XXI. Parag. *antepenult.*

ing,

ing, by prudence, by innocence, all shining out in one charming object; but she must fall, fall by the man whom she has chosen for her protector; I would not for a thousand worlds have thy crime to answer for.

Upon my faith, Lovelace, the subject sticks with me, notwithstanding I find I have not the honour of the lady's good opinion. And the more, when I reflect upon her father's brutal curse, and the villainous hard-heartedness of all her family. But, nevertheless, I should be desirous to know, (*if thou wilt proceed*) by what gradations, arts, and contrivances, thou effectest thy ingrateful purpose. And, O Lovelace! I conjure thee, if thou art a *man*, let not the specious devils thou hast brought her among, be suffered to triumph over her; nor make her the victim of *unmanly artifices*. If she yield to *fair seductions*, if I may so express myself; if thou canst raise a weakness in her by love, or by arts not inhuman; I shall the less pity her: and shall then conclude, that there is not a woman in the world who can resist a bold and resolute lover.

A messenger is just now arrived from my uncle. The mortification, it seems, is got to his knee; and the surgeons declare, that he cannot live many days. He therefore sends for me directly, with these shocking words, *That I will come and close his eyes*. My servant or his must of necessity be in town every day on his case, or on other affairs; and one of them shall regularly attend you for any letter or commands. It will be charity to write to me as often as you can. For although I am likely to be a considerable gainer by the poor man's death, yet I cannot say, that I at all love these scenes of death and the doctor so near me. The *doctor* and *death* I should have said; for that's the natural order, and, generally speaking, the one is but the harbinger to the other.

If, therefore, you decline to oblige me, I shall think you are displeased with my freedom. But let me tell you at the same time, that no man has a right to be displeased at freedoms taken with him for faults he is not ashamed to be guilty of.

J. BELFORD.

LETTER VII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

I Thank you and Mr. Hickman for his letter, sent me with such kind expedition; and proceed to obey my dear menacing tyranness.

She then gives the particulars of what passed between herself and Mr. Lovelace on Tuesday morning, in relation to his four friends, and to Miss Partington, pretty much to the same effect as in Mr. Lovelace's Letter, No. 1. *And then proceeds:*

He is constantly accusing me of over-scrupulousness. He says, I am always out of humour with him: that I could not have behaved more reservedly to Mr. Solmes: and that it is contrary to all his hopes and notions, that he should not, in so long a time, find himself able to inspire the person whom he hoped so soon to have the honour to call his, with the least distinguishing tenderness for him before-hand.

Silly and partial encroacher! not to know *to what to attribute the reserve I am forced to treat him with!* But his *pride* has eaten up his *prudence*. It is indeed a dirty low pride, that has swallowed up the *true* pride, which should have set him above the vanity that has over-run him.

Yet he pretends, that he has no pride but in obliging me; and is always talking of his reverence and humility, and such sort of stuff: but of this I am sure, that he has, as I observed the first time I saw him*, too much regard to his own person, greatly to value that of his wife, marry he whom he will; and I must be blind, if I did not see, that he is exceedingly vain of his external advantages, and of that address, which, if it has *any* merit in it to an outward eye, is perhaps owing more to his confidence, than to any-thing else.

Have you not beheld the man, when I was your happy guest, as he walked to his chariot, looking about him, as if to observe what eyes his specious person and air had attracted?

But, indeed, we had some homely

* See Vol. I. Page 12.

coxcombs as proud as if they had persons to be proud of; at the same time that it was apparent, that the pains they took about themselves but the more exposed their defects.

The man who is fond of being thought *more* or *better* than he *is*, as I have often observed, but provokes a scrutiny into his pretensions; and that generally produces contempt. For pride, as I believe I have heretofore said, is an infallible sign of weakness; of *something wrong in the head or heart, or in both*. He that exalts himself, insults his neighbour; who is provoked to question in him even that merit, which, were he modest, would perhaps be allowed to be his due.

You will say, that I am very grave: and so I am. Mr. Lovelace is extremely sunk in my opinion since Monday night: nor see I before me any-thing that can afford me a pleasing hope. For what, with a mind so *unequal as his*, can be my *best* hope?

I think I mentioned to you, in my former, that my cloaths were brought me. You fluttered me so, that I am not sure I did. But I know I designed to mention that they were. They were brought me on Thursday; but neither my few guineas with them, nor any of my books, except a *Drexelius on Eternity*, the good old *Practice of Piety*, and a *Francis Spira*. My brother's wit, I suppose. He thinks he does well to point out death and despair to me. I wish for the one, and every now-and-then am on the brink of the other.

You will the less wonder at my being so very solemn, when added to the above, and to my uncertain situation, I tell you, that they have sent me with these books a letter from my cousin Morden. It has set my heart against Mr. Lovelace. Against myself too. I send it inclosed. If you please, my dear, you may read it here.

'COLONEL MORDEN, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

'FLORENCE, APRIL 13.

'I Am extremely concerned to hear of 'a difference betwixt the rest of a 'family so near and dear to me, and '*you* still dearer to me than any of the 'rest.

'My cousin James has acquainted 'me with the offers you have had, and 'with your refusals. I wonder not at 'either. Such charming promises at 'so early an age as when I left England; and those promises, as I have 'often heard, so greatly exceeded, as 'well in your person as mind; how 'much must you be admired! How 'few must there be worthy of you!

'Your parents, the most indulgent 'in the world, to a child the most deserving, have given way, it seems, to 'your refusal of several gentlemen. 'They have contented themselves at 'last to name one with *earnestness* to 'you, because of the address of another whom they cannot approve.

'They had not reason, it seems, from 'your behaviour, to think you greatly 'averse: so they proceeded: perhaps too 'hastily for a delicacy like yours. But 'when all was fixed on their parts, and 'most extraordinary terms concluded 'in your favour; terms, which abundantly shew the gentleman's just value for you: you flew off with a 'warmth and vehemence little suited 'to that sweetness which gave grace to 'all your actions.

'I know very little of either of the 'gentlemen: but of Mr. Lovelace I 'know more than of Mr. Solmes. I 'wish I could say more to his advantage 'than I can. As to every qualification 'but *one*, your brother owns there is no comparison. But that *one* outweighs 'all the rest together. It cannot be 'thought, that Miss Clarissa Harlowe 'will dispense with MORALS in a husband.

'What, my dearest cousin, shall I 'plead first to you on this occasion? 'Your duty, your interest, your temporal, and your eternal welfare, do, 'and may all, depend upon this single 'point, *The morality of a husband*. A 'woman who hath a wicked husband, 'may find it difficult to *be* good, and 'out of her power to *do* good; and is 'therefore in a worse situation than the 'man can be in, who hath a bad wife. 'You preserve all your religious regards, I understand. I wonder not 'that you do. I should have wondered 'had you not. But what can you promise yourself, as to perseverance in 'them with an immoral husband?

'If your parents and you differ in 'sentiment on this important occasion, 'let me ask you, my dear cousin, who

'ought

'ought to give way? I own to you, 'that I should have thought there could 'not any-where have been a more suit- 'able match for you, than with Mr. 'Lovelace, had he been a moral man. 'I should have very little to say against 'a man, of whose actions I am not to 'set up myself as a judge, did he not 'address my cousin. But, on this oc- 'casion, let me tell you, my dear Cla- 'rissa, that Mr. Lovelace cannot pos- 'sibly deserve you. He *may* reform, 'you'll say: but he may *not*. Habit is 'not soon or easily shaken off. Liber- 'tines, who are libertines in defiance 'of talents, of superior lights, of con- 'viction, hardly ever reform but by 'miracle, or by incapacity. Well do 'I know mine own sex. Well am I 'able to judge of the probability of 'the reformation of a licentious young 'man, who has not been fastened upon 'by sickness, by affliction, by calamity: 'who has a prosperous run of fortune 'before him: his spirits high: his 'will uncontroulable: the company he 'keeps, perhaps such as himself, con- 'firming him in all his courses, assist- 'ing him in all his enterprizes.

'As to the other gentleman, sup- 'pose, my dear cousin, you do not like 'him at *present*, it is far from being 'unlikely, that you will *hereafter*: per- 'haps the more, for not liking him '*now*. He can hardly sink *lower* in 'your opinion: he may *rise*. Very sel- 'dom is it, that *high* expectations are 'so much as *tolerably* answered. How, 'indeed, *can* they, when a fine and ex- 'tensive imagination carries it's ex- 'pectation infinitely beyond reality, in 'the highest of our sublunary enjoy- 'ments? A woman adorned with such 'an imagination sees no defect in a fa- 'voured object, (the less, if she be not 'conscious of any wilful fault in her- 'self) till it is too late to rectify the 'mistakes occasioned by her generous 'credulity.

'But suppose a person of your talents 'were to marry a man of inferior ta- 'lents; who, in this case, can be so 'happy in *herself*, as Miss Clarissa Har- 'lowe? What delight do you take in 'doing good! How happily do you de- 'vote the several portions of the day to 'your own improvement, and to the 'advantage of all that move within 'your sphere!—And *then* such is your 'taste, such are your acquirements in 'the politer studies, and in the politer 'amusements; such your excellence in 'all the different parts of œconomy fit 'for a young lady's inspection and 'practice; that your friends would wish 'you to be taken off as little as possible 'by regards that may be called merely 'personal.

'But as to what may be the conse- 'quence respecting yourself, respecting 'a young lady of your talents, from 'the preference you are suspected to 'give to a libertine, I would have you, 'my dear cousin, consider what that 'may be. A mind so pure, to mingle 'with a mind impure! And will not 'such a man as this engross all your 'solitudes! Will he not perpetually 'fill you with anxieties for him and 'for yourself!—The divine and civil 'powers defied, and their sanctions 'broken through by him, on every not 'merely *accidental*, but *meditated* oc- 'casion. To be agreeable to him, and 'to hope to preserve an interest in his 'affections, you must probably be 'obliged to abandon all your own 'laudable pursuits. You must enter 'into his pleasures and distastes. You 'must give up your own virtuous com- 'panions for his profligate ones—Per- 'haps be forsaken by yours, because of 'the scandal he daily gives. Can you 'hope, cousin, with such a man as this, 'to be *long* so good as you *now* are? 'If not, consider which of your present 'laudable delights you would chuse to 'give up? Which of his culpable ones 'to follow him in? How could you 'brook to go backward, instead of for- 'ward, in those duties which you now 'so exemplarily perform? And how do 'you know, if you once give way, where 'you shall be suffered, where you shall 'be *able*, to stop?

'Your brother acknowledges, that 'Mr. Solmes is not near so agreeable 'in person as Mr. Lovelace. But 'what is *person*, with such a lady as I 'have the honour to be now writing 'to? He owns likewise that he has not 'the address of Mr. Lovelace: but 'what a *mere* personal advantage is a 'plausible *address*, without *morals*? 'A woman had better take a husband 'whose manners she were to fashion, 'than to find them ready-fashioned to 'her hand, at the price of his morality? 'a price that is often paid for travelling 'accomplishments. O my dear cou-

'sin, were you but with us here at 'Florence, or at Rome, or at Paris, '(where also I resided for many 'months) to see the gentlemen whose 'supposed *rough* English manners at 'setting out are to be polished, and what 'their improvements are in their return 'through the same places, you would 'infinitely prefer the man in his *first* 'stage to the same man in his *last*. 'You find the difference on their re-'turn—A fondness for foreign fa-'shions, an attachment to foreign 'vices, and a supercilious contempt of 'his own country and countrymen; '(himself more despicable than the 'most despicable of those he despises) 'these, with an unblushing effrontery, 'are too generally the attainments that 'concur to finish the travelled gentle-'man!

'Mr. Lovelace, I know, deserves to 'have an exception made in his favour; 'for he is really a man of parts and 'learning: he was esteemed so both here 'and at Rome; and a fine person, and 'a generous turn of mind, gave him 'great advantages. But you need not 'be told, that a libertine man of sense 'does infinitely more mischief, than a 'libertine of weak parts is able to do. 'And this I will tell you farther, that 'it was Mr. Lovelace's own fault that 'he was not still more respected than 'he was, among the *literati* here. 'There were, in short, some liberties 'in which he indulged himself, that 'endangered his person and his liberty; 'and made the best and most worthy 'of those who honoured him with 'their notice, give him up; and his 'stay both at Florence and at Rome 'shorter than he designed.

'This is all I chuse to say of Mr. 'Lovelace. I had much rather have 'had reason to give him a quite con-'trary character. But as to rakes or 'libertines in general, I, who know 'them well, must be allowed, because 'of the mischiefs they have *always* in 'their *hearts*, and *too often* in their '*power*, to do your sex, to add still a 'few more words upon this topick.

'A libertine, my dear cousin, a *plot-'ting*, an *intriguing* libertine, must be 'generally *remorseless*—*Unjust* he must 'always be. The noble rule of doing 'to others what he would have done to 'himself, is the first rule he breaks; 'and every day he breaks it; the of-'tener, the greater his triumph. He 'has great contempt for your sex. He 'believes no woman chaste, because he 'is a profligate. Every woman who *favours him*, *confirms him* in his 'wicked incredulity. He is always 'plotting to extend the mischiefs he de-'lights in. If a woman loves such a 'man, how can she bear the thought 'of dividing her interest in his affec-'tions, with half the town, and that 'perhaps the dregs of it? Then so sen-'sual!—How will a young lady of 'your delicacy bear with so sensual a 'man? A man who makes a jest of his 'vows; and who perhaps will break 'your spirit by the most unmanly in-'sults. To be a libertine, at *setting out*, 'all compunction, all humanity, must 'be overcome. To *continue* to be a 'libertine, is to continue to be every-'thing vile and inhuman. Prayers, 'tears, and the most abject submission, 'are but fuel to his pride: wagering 'perhaps with lewd companions, and, 'not improbably, with lewder women, 'upon instances which he boasts of 'to them of your patient sufferings, 'and broken spirit, and bringing them 'home to witness to both.

'I write what I know *has* been.

'I mention not fortunes squandered, 'estates mortgaged or sold, and poste-'rity robbed—Nor yet a multitude of 'other evils, too gross, too shocking, 'to be mentioned to a person of your 'delicacy.

'All these, my dear cousin, to be 'shunned, all the evils I have named 'to be avoided; the power of doing all 'the good you have been accustomed 'to do, preserved, nay, encreased, by the 'separate provision that will be made 'for you: your charming diversions, 'and exemplary employments, all main-'tained; and every good habit perpetuat-'ed: and all by *one* sacrifice, the fading 'pleasure of the eye! Who would not, '(since every-thing is not to be met 'with in one man; who would not) 'to preserve so many essentials, give 'up so light, so unpermanent a plea-'sure!

'Weigh all these things, which I 'might insist upon to more advantage, 'did I think it needful to one of your 'prudence—Weigh them well, my be-'loved cousin; and if it be not the will 'of your parents that you should con-'tinue single, resolve to oblige them;

'and

'and let it not be said, that the powers 'of fancy shall (as in many others of 'your sex) be too hard for your duty 'and your prudence. The less agree-'able the man, the more obliging the 'compliance. Remember, that he is a 'sober man—A man who has reputa-'tion to lose, and whose reputation 'therefore is a security for his good be-'haviour to you.

'You have an opportunity offered 'you to give the highest instance, that 'can be given of filial duty. Embrace 'it. It is worthy *of* you. It is ex-'pected *from* you; however, for your 'inclination-sake, we may be sorry that 'you are called upon to give it. Let 'it be said, that you have been able to 'lay an obligation upon your parents, '(a proud word, my cousin!) which 'you could not do, were it not laid '*against* your inclination!—Upon pa-'rents who have laid a thousand upon 'you: who are set upon this point: who 'will not give it up: who have given up 'many points to you, even of this very 'nature: and in their turn, for the sake 'of their own authority, as well as 'judgment, expect to be obliged.

'I hope I shall soon, in person, con-'gratulate you upon this your merito-'rious compliance. To settle and give 'up my trusteeship, is one of the princi-'pal motives of my leaving these parts. 'I shall be glad to settle it to every 'one's satisfaction; to yours particu-'larly.

'If on my arrival I find a happy 'union, as formerly, reign in a fa-'mily so dear to me, it will be an un-'speakable pleasure to me; and I shall 'perhaps so dispose my affairs, as to 'be near you for ever.

'I have written a very long letter, 'and will add no more, than that I am, 'with the greatest respect, my dearest 'cousin, *your most affectionate and faith-'ful servant*,

'WM. MORDEN.'

I will suppose, my dear Miss Howe, that you have read my cousin's letter. It is now in vain to wish it had come sooner. But if it *had*, I might perhaps have been so rash as to give Mr. Lovelace the *fatal meeting*, as I little thought of going away with him.

But I should hardly have given him the *expectation* of so doing, *previous* to the meeting, which made him come prepared; and the revocation of which he so artfully made ineffectual.

Persecuted as I was, and little expecting so much condescension, as my aunt, to my great mortification, has told me (and you confirm) I should have met with, it is, however, hard to say, what I should or should not have done as to *meeting him*, had it come in time: but this effect I verily believe it would have had—To have made me insist with all my might, on going over, out of all their ways, to the kind writer of the instructive letter, and on making a father (a protector, as well as a friend) of a kinsman, who is one of my trustees. This, circumstanced as I was, would have been a natural, at least an unexceptionable protection.—But I *was to be* unhappy! And how it cuts me to the heart to think, that I can already subscribe to my cousin's character of a libertine, so well drawn in the letter which I suppose you now to have read!

That a man of a character, which ever was my abhorrence, should fall to my lot!—But depending on my own strength; having no reason to apprehend danger from headstrong and disgraceful impulses; I too little perhaps cast up my eyes to the Supreme Director: in whom, mistrusting myself, I ought to have placed my whole confidence—And the more, when I saw myself so perseveringly addressed by a man of this character.

Inexperience and presumption, with the help of a brother and sister who have low ends to answer in my disgrace, have been my *ruin!*—A hard word, my dear! But I repeat it upon deliberation: since, let the best happen which *now* can happen, my reputation is destroyed; a rake is my portion: and what that portion is, my cousin Morden's letter has acquainted you.

Pray keep it by you, till called for. I saw it not myself (having not the heart to inspect my trunks) till this morning. I would not for the world this man should see it; because it might occasion mischief between the most violent spirit, and the most settled brave one in the world, as my cousin's is said to be.

This letter was inclosed (opened) in a blank cover. Scorn and detest me as they will, I wonder that one line

was

was not sent with it—were it but to have more particularly pointed the design of it, in the same generous spirit, that sent me the Spira.

The sealing of the cover was with black-wax. I hope there is no new occasion in the family to give reason for black-wax. But if there were, it would, to be sure, have been mentioned, and laid at my door—perhaps too justly!

I had begun a letter to my cousin; but laid it by, because of the uncertainty of my situation, and expecting every day for several days past to be at a greater certainty. You bid me write to him some time ago, you know. Then it was I began it: for I have great pleasure in obeying you in all I may. So I ought to have; for you are the only friend left me. And moreover, you generally honour me with your own observance of the advice I take the liberty to offer you: for I pretend to say, I give better advice than I have taken. And so I had need. For, I know not how it comes about, but I am, in my own opinion, a poor soft creature: and yet cannot charge myself with one criminal or faulty inclination. Do you know, my dear, how this can be?

Yet I can tell you *how*, I believe—One devious step at setting out!—That must be it:—which pursued, has led me so far out of my path, that I am in a wilderness of doubt and error; and never, never, shall find my way out of it: for, although but one pace awry at first, it has led me hundreds and hundreds of miles out of my path: and the poor estray has not one kind friend, nor has met with one directing passenger, to help her to recover it.

But I, presumptuous creature! must rely so much upon my own knowledge of the right path!—little apprehending that an *ignis fatuus* with it's false fires (and yet I had heard enough of such) would arise to mislead me! And now, in the midst of fens and quagmires, it plays around me, and around me, throwing me back again, whenever I think myself in the right track. But there is one common point, in which all shall meet, err widely as they may. In that I shall be laid quietly down at last: and then will all my calamities be at an end.

But how I stray again; stray from my intention! I would have said, that I had begun a letter to my cousin Morden some time ago: but that now I can never end it. You will believe I cannot: for how shall I tell him, that all his compliments are misbestowed? That all his advice is thrown away? All his warnings vain? And that even my highest expectation is to be the wife of that free liver, whom he so pathetically warns me to shun?

Let me, however, have your prayers joined with my own, (my fate depending, as it seems, upon the *lips of such a man*) That whatever shall be my destiny, that dreadful part of my father's malediction, that I may be punished by the man in whom he supposes I put my confidence, may not take place! That this for *Mr. Lovelace's* own sake, and for the sake of *human nature*, may not be! or, if it be necessary, in support of the parental authority, that I should be punished by *him*, that it may not be by his *premeditated* or *wilful* baseness; but that I may be able to acquit his *intention*, if not his *action!* Otherwise, my fault will appear to be doubled in the eye of the event-judging world. And yet, methinks, I would be glad, that the unkindness of my father and uncles, whose hearts have already been too much wounded by my error, may be justified in every article, excepting in this heavy curse: and that my father will be pleased to withdraw that before it be generally known; at least that most dreadful part of it which regards futurity!

I must lay down my pen. I must brood over these reflections. Once more, before I close my cousin's letter, I will peruse it. And then I shall have it by heart.

LETTER VIII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

SUNDAY NIGHT, MAY 7.

WHEN you reflect upon my unhappy situation, which is attended with so many indelicate and even shocking circumstances, some of which my pride will not let me think of with patience; all aggravated by the contents

tents of my coufin's affecting letter; you will not wonder, that the vapourifhnefs which has laid hold of my heart, fhould rife to my pen. And yet it would be more kind, more friendly in me, to conceal from *you*, who take fuch a generous intereft in my concerns, that worft part of my griefs, which communication and complaint cannot relieve.

But to whom can I unbofom myfelf but to you? When the man who ought to be my protector, as he has brought upon me all my diftreffes, adds to my apprehenfions; when I have not even a fervant on whofe fidelity I can rely, or to whom I can break my griefs as they arife; and when his bountiful temper and gay heart attach every-one to him; and I am but a *cypher*, to give *him* fignificance, and *myfelf* pain?—Thefe griefs, therefore, do what I can, will fometimes burft into tears; and thefe mingling with my ink, will blot my paper. And I know you will not grudge me the temporary relief.

But I fhall go on in the ftrain I left off with in my laft; when I intended rather to apologize for my melancholy. But let what I have above written, once for all be my apology. My misfortunes have given you a call to difcharge the nobleft offices of the friendfhip we have vowed to each other, in advice and confolation; and it would be an injury to it, and to you, to fuppofe it needed even that call.

She then tells Mifs Howe, that now her cloaths are come, Mr. Lovelace is continually teazing her to go abroad with him in a coach, attended by whom fhe pleafes of her own fex, either for the air, or to the publick diverfions.

She gives the particulars of a converfation that has paffed between them on that fubject, and his feveral propofals. But takes notice, that he fays not the leaft word of the folemnity which he fo much preffed for before they came to town; and which, as fhe obferves, was neceffary to give propriety to his propofals.

Now, my dear, *fays fhe*, I cannot bear the life I live. I would be glad at my heart to be out of his reach. If I were, he fhould foon *find the difference*. If I muft be humbled, it had better be by thofe to whom I owe duty, than by him. My aunt writes in her letter *, that fhe dare not propofe anything in my favour. You tell me, that upon enquiry, you find †, that, had I not been unhappily feduced away, a change of meafures was actually refolved upon; and that my mother, particularly, was determined to exert herfelf for the reftoration of the family peace; and, in order to fucceed the better, had thoughts of trying to engage my uncle Harlowe in her party.

Let me build on thefe foundations. I can but try, my dear. It is my duty to try all *probable* methods to reftore the poor outcaft to favour. And who knows but that once indulgent uncle, who has very great weight in the family, may be induced to interpofe in my behalf? I will give up all right and title to my grandfather's deviſes and bequefts, with all my heart and foul, to whom they pleafe, in order to make my propofal palatable to my brother. And that my furrender may be effectual, I will engage never to marry.

What think you, my dear, of this expedient? Surely they cannot refolve to renounce me for ever. If they look with impartial eyes upon what has happened, they will have fomething to blame *themfelves* for, as well as *me*.

I prefume, that you will be of opinion, that this expedient is worth trying. But here is my difficulty: if I fhould write, my hard-hearted brother has fo ftrongly confederated them all againft me, that my letter would be handed about from one to another, till he had hardened every-one to refufe my requeft; whereas could my uncle be engaged to efpoufe my caufe, as from *himfelf*, I fhould have fome hope; as I prefume to think he would foon have my mother and my aunt of his party.

What therefore I am thinking of, is this—Suppofe Mr. Hickman, whofe good character has gained him everybody's refpect, fhould put himfelf in my uncle Harlowe's way? And (as if from your knowledge of the ftate of things between Mr. Lovelace and me)

* See Vol. III. Letter XLVIII. † Ibid. Letter LV.

aſſure

assure him not only of the above particulars, but that I am under no obligations that shall hinder me from taking his directions?

I submit the whole to your discretion, whether to pursue it at all, or in what manner. But if it *be* pursued, and if my uncle refuses to interest himself in my favour upon Mr. Hickman's application as from you, (for so, for obvious reasons, it must be put) I can then have no hope; and my next step in the mind I am in, shall be to throw myself into the protection of the ladies of his family.

It were an impiety to adopt the following lines, because it would be throwing upon the decrees of Providence a fault too much my own. But often do I revolve them, for the sake of the general similitude which they bear to my unhappy, yet undesigned error.

'To you, great gods! I make my last appeal:
'Or clear my virtues, or my crimes reveal.
'If wand'ring in the maze of life I run,
'And backward tread the steps I sought to shun,
'Impute my error to your own decree:
'My FEET are guilty; but my HEART is free.'

The lady dates again on Monday, to let Miss Howe know, that Mr. Lovelace, on observing her uneasiness, had introduced to her Mr. Mennell, Mrs. Fretchville's kinsman, who managed all her affairs. She calls him a young officer of sense and politeness, who gave her an account of the house and furniture, to the same effect that Mr. Lovelace had done before; as also of the melancholy way Mrs. Fretchville is in.*

She tells Miss Howe, how extremely urgent Mr. Lovelace was with the gentleman to get his spouse (as he now always calls her before company) a sight of the house: and that Mr. Mennell undertook that very afternoon to shew her all of it, except the apartment Mrs. Fretchville should be in when she went. But that she chused not to take another step till she knew how she approved of her scheme to have her uncle sounded; and with what success, if tried, it would be attended.

Mr. Lovelace, in his humorous way, gives his friend an account of the lady's peevishness and dejection, on receiving a letter with her cloaths. He regrets that he has lost her confidence; which he attributes to his bringing her into the company of his four companions. Yet he thinks he must excuse them, and censure her for over-niceness; for that he never saw men behave better, at least not them.

Mentioning his introducing Mr. Mennell to her—

'Now, Jack,' *says he*, 'was it not 'very kind of Mr. Mennell [*Captain* 'Mennel I sometimes called him; for 'among the military men there is no 'such officer, thou knowest, as a *lieutenant*, or an *ensign*—Was it not very 'kind in him] to come along with me 'so readily as he did to satisfy my be'loved about the vapourish lady and 'the house?

"But who is Captain Mennell?" 'methinks thou askest: "I never "heard of such a man as Captain "Mennell."

'Very likely. But knowest thou 'not young Newcomb, honest Dole'man's nephew?'

"O-ho! Is it he?"

'It is. And I have changed his 'name by virtue of my own single au'thority. Knowest thou not, that I 'am a great name-father? Preferments 'I bestow both military and civil. I 'give estates, and take them away at 'my pleasure. Quality too I create. 'And by a still more valuable prero'gative, I *degrade* by virtue of my 'own imperial will, without any other 'act of forfeiture than for my own con'venience. What a poor thing is a 'monarch to me!

'But Mennell, now he has seen this 'angel of a woman, has qualms; that's 'the devil!—I shall have enough to do 'to keep him right. But it is the less 'wonder, that *he* should stagger, when 'a few hours conversation with the 'same lady could make four much 'more hardened varlets find *hearts*— 'Only, that I am confident, that I 'shall at last reward her virtue, if her

* See Vol. III, Letter LXII.

'virtue

'virtue overcome me, or I should find 'it impossible to persevere—For at 'times I have confounded qualms my- 'self. But say not a word of them to 'the confraternity: nor laugh at me 'for them thyself.'

In another letter, dated Monday night, he writes as follows:

'This perverse lady keeps me at such 'distance, that I am sure something is 'going on between her and Miss Howe, 'notwithstanding the prohibition from 'Mrs. Howe to both: and as I have 'thought it some degree of merit in 'myself to punish others for their trans- 'gressions, I am of opinion that both 'these girls are punishable for their 'breach of parental injunctions. And 'as to their letter-carrier, I have been 'enquiring into his way of living; and 'finding him to be a common poacher, a 'deer-stealer, and warren-robber, who, 'under pretence of higgling, deals with 'a set of customers, who constantly 'take all he brings, whether fish, fowl, 'or venison, I hold myself justified '(since Wilson's conveyance must at 'present be sacred) to have him stripped 'and robbed, and what money he has 'about him given to the poor; since if 'I take not money as well as letters, 'I shall be suspected.

'To serve one's self and punish a 'villain at the same time, is serving 'publick and private. The law was 'not made for such a man as me. And 'I *must* come at correspondences so 'disobediently carried on.

'But, on second thoughts, if I could 'find out that the dear creature carried 'any of her letters in her pockets, I 'can get her to a play or to a concert, 'and she may have the misfortune to 'lose her pockets.

'But how shall I find this out; since 'her Dorcas knows no more of her 'dressing and undressing, than her 'Lovelace? For she is dressed for the 'day, before she appears even to her ser- 'vant. Vilely suspicious! Upon my 'soul, Jack, a suspicious temper is a 'punishable temper. If a woman su- 'spects a rogue in an honest man, is 'it not enough to make the honest man 'who knows it a rogue?

'But as to her pockets, I think my 'mind hankers after them, as the less 'mischievous attempt. But they can- 'not hold all the letters that I should wish 'to see. And yet a woman's pockets 'are half as deep as she is high. Tied 'round the sweet *levities*, I presume, 'as ballast-bags, lest the wind, as they 'move with full sail, from whale rib- 'bed canvas, should blow away the 'gypsies.'

He then, in apprehension that something is meditating between the two ladies, or that something may be set on foot to get Miss Harlowe out of his hands, relates several of his contrivances, and boasts of his instructions given in writing to Dorcas and to his servant Will Summers; and says, that he has provided against every possible accident, even to bring her back *if she should escape, or in case she should go abroad, and then* refuse to return; *and hopes so to manage, as that, should he make an attempt, whether he succeeded in it or not, he may have a pretence to detain her.*

He then proceeds as follows:

'I have ordered Dorcas to cultivate 'by all means her lady's favour; to 'lament her incapacity as to writing 'and reading; to shew letters to her 'lady, as from pretended country rela- 'tions; to beg her advice how to answer 'them, and to get them answered; and 'to be always aiming at scrawling with 'a pen, lest inky fingers should give 'suspicion. I have moreover given the 'wench an ivory-leafed pocket-book, 'with a silver pencil, that she may 'make memoranda on occasion.

'And let me tell thee that the lady 'has already (at Mrs. Sinclair's mo- 'tion) removed her cloaths out of the 'trunks they came in, into an ample 'mahogany repository, where they will 'lie at full length, and which has 'drawers in it for linen. A repository, 'that used to hold the richest suits 'which some of the nymphs put on, 'when they are to be dressed out to cap- 'tivate, or to ape quality. For many 'a countess, thou knowest, has our 'mother equipped; nay, two or three 'dutchesses, who live upon *quality-* 'terms with their lords. But this to 'such as will come up to her price, and 'can make an appearance like quality 'themselves on the occasion: for the 'reputation of persons of birth must

'not lie at the mercy of every *under-degreed* sinner.

'A master-key which will open every 'lock in this chest, is put into Dorcas's hands; and she is to take care, 'when she searches for papers, before 'she removes any-thing, to observe 'how it lies, that she may replace all 'to a hair. Sally and Polly can occasionally help to transcribe. Slow 'and sure with such an Argus-eyed 'charmer must be all my movements.

'It is impossible that one so young 'and so inexperienced as she is, can 'have all her caution from herself; 'the behaviour of the women so unexceptionable; no revellings, no company ever admitted into this inner-house; all genteel, quiet, and easy, 'in it; the nymphs well-bred, and 'well-read; her first disgusts to the old 'one got over.—It must be Miss Howe 'therefore [Who once was in danger 'of being taken in by one of our class, 'by honest Sir George Colmar, as thou 'hast heard] that makes my progress 'difficult.

'Thou seest, Belford, by the above '*precautionaries*, that I forget nothing. 'As the song says, it is not to be imagined—

> "On what slight strings
> "Depend those things
> "On which men build their glory!"

'So far, so good. I shall never rest 'till I have discovered in the first place, 'where the dear creature puts her letters; and in the next till I have got 'her to a play, to a concert, or to take 'an airing with me out of town for a 'day or two.'

* *

'I GAVE thee just now some of *my* 'contrivances. Dorcas, who is ever 'attentive to all her lady's motions, 'has given me some instances of her '*mistress's* precautions. She wafers her 'letters, it seems, in two places; pricks 'the wafers; and then seals upon them. 'No doubt but the same care is taken 'with regard to those brought to her; 'for she always examines the seals of 'the latter before she opens them.

'I must, I must come at them. This 'difficulty augments my curiosity. 'Strange, so much as she writes, and 'at all hours, that not one sleepy or 'forgetful moment has offered in our 'favour!

'A fair contention, thou seest: not 'plead thou in her favour her *youth*, 'her *beauty*, her *family*, her *fortune*. 'CREDULITY, she has none; and 'with regard to her TENDER YEARS, 'Am I not a *young fellow* myself? As 'to BEAUTY; pr'ythee, Jack, do thou, 'to spare my modesty, make a comparison between my Clarissa for a *woman*, and thy Lovelace for a *man*. 'For her FAMILY, that was not known 'to it's country a century ago: and I 'hate them all but her. Have I not 'cause?—For her FORTUNE; fortune, 'thou knowest, was ever a *stimulus* with 'me; and this for reasons not ignoble. 'Do not girls of fortune adorn themselves on purpose to engage our attention? Seek they not to draw us into 'their snares? Depend they not, generally, on their *fortunes*, in the views 'they have upon us, more than on 'their *merits*? Shall we deprive them 'of the benefit of their *principal* dependence?—Can I, in particular, 'marry *every girl* who wishes to obtain my notice? If therefore, in support of the libertine principles for 'which none of the sweet rogues hate 'us, a woman of fortune is brought 'to yield homage to her emperor, and 'any consequences attend the *subjugation*, is not such a one shielded by her 'fortune, as well from insult and contempt, as from indigence?—All, then, 'that admits of debate between my beloved and me, is only this—Which 'of the two has more *wit*, more *circumspection*—And that remains to be 'tried.

'A sad life however, this life of 'doubt and suspense, for the poor lady 'to live, as well as for me; that is to 'say, if she be not *naturally* jealous—'If she be, her uneasiness is constitutional, and she cannot help it; nor 'will it in that case hurt her. For a 'suspicious temper will *make* occasions 'for doubt, if none were to offer to 'it's hand. My fair-one therefore, if 'naturally suspicious, is obliged to me 'for saving her the trouble of *studying* 'for these occasions—But after all, the 'plainest paths in our journies through 'life are the safest and best I believe, 'although it is not given me to chuse 'them. I am not, however, singular

'in

Plate VIII. Published as the Act directs, by Harrison & Co. Feb.y 7. 1784.

'in the purſuit of the more intricate 'paths; ſince there are thouſands and 'ten thouſands who had rather fiſh in 'troubled waters than in ſmooth.'

LETTER IX.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

TUESDAY, MAY 9.

I Am a very unhappy man. This lady is ſaid to be one of the ſweeteſt-tempered creatures in the world: and ſo I thought her. But to *me*, ſhe is one of the moſt perverſe. I never was ſuppoſed to be an ill-natured mortal neither. How can it be? I imagined for a long while, that we were born to make each other happy: but quite the contrary; we really ſeem to be ſent to plague each other.

I will write a comedy, I think. I have a title ready; and that's half the work. *The Quarrelſome Lovers*. 'Twill do. There's ſomething new and ſtriking in it. Yet, more or leſs, all lovers quarrel. Old Terence has taken notice of that; and obſerves upon it, That lovers *falling-out* occaſions lovers *falling-in*; and a better underſtanding of courſe. 'Tis natural that it ſhould be ſo. But with us, we fall-out ſo often, without falling-in once; and a ſecond quarrel ſo generally happens before a firſt is made up; that it is hard to gueſs what event our loves will be attended with. But perſeverance is my glory, and patience my handmaid, when I have in view an object worthy of my attempts. What is there in an eaſy conqueſt? Hudibras queſtions well—

'——What mad lover ever dy'd
'To gain a ſoft and eaſy bride?
'Or, for a lady tender-hearted,
'In purling ſtreams, or hemp, departed?'

But I will lead to the occaſion of this preamble.

I had been out. On my return, meeting Dorcas on the ſtairs—'Your 'lady in her chamber, Dorcas?'—'In 'the dining-room, Sir; and if ever 'you hope for an opportunity to come 'at a letter, it muſt be now. For at 'her feet I ſaw one lie, which, as may 'be ſeen by it's open folds, ſhe has 'been reading, with a little parcel of 'others ſhe is now buſied with—All 'pulled out of her pocket, as I believe. So, Sir, you'll know where 'to find them another time.'

I was ready to leap for joy, and inſtantly reſolved to bring forward an expedient which I had held in petto; and entering into the dining-room with an air of tranſport, I boldly claſped my arms about her, as ſhe ſat; ſhe huddling up her papers in her handkerchief all the time; the dropt paper unſeen. 'O my deareſt life, a lucky ex-'pedient have Mr. Mennell and I hit 'upon, juſt now. In order to haſten 'Mrs. Fretchville to quit the houſe, I 'have agreed, if you approve of it, 'to entertain her cook, her houſe-'maid, and two men-ſervants, (about 'whom ſhe was very ſolicitous) till 'you are provided to your mind. And 'that no accommodations may be 'wanted, I have conſented to take the 'houſhold linen at an appraiſement.

'I am to pay down five hundred 'pounds, and the remainder as ſoon 'as the bills can be looked up, and 'the amount of them adjuſted. Thus 'will you have a charming houſe entirely ready to receive you. Some 'of the ladies of my family will ſoon 'be with you: they will not permit 'you long to ſuſpend my happy day. 'And that nothing may be wanting to 'gratify your utmoſt punctilio, I will 'till then conſent to ſtay here at Mrs. 'Sinclair's, while you reſide at your 'new houſe; and leave the reſt to your 'own generoſity. O my beloved crea-'ture, will not this be agreeable to 'you? I am ſure it will—It muſt—' And claſping her cloſer to me, I gave her a more fervent kiſs than ever I had dared to give her before. I permitted not my ardour to overcome my diſcretion however; for I took care to ſet my foot upon the letter, and ſcraped it farther from her, as it were behind her chair.

She was in a paſſion at the liberty I took. Bowing low, I begged her pardon; and ſtooping ſtill lower, in the ſame motion, took up the letter, and whipt it into my boſom.

Pox on me for a puppy, a fool, a blockhead, a clumſy varlet, a mere Jack Belford!—I thought myſelf a much cleverer fellow than I am!—Why could I not have been followed

in by Dorcas, who might have taken it up, while I addreſſed her lady?

For here, the letter being unfolded, I could not put it into my boſom, without alarming her ears, as my ſudden motion did her eyes.—Up ſhe flew in a moment: 'Traitor! Judas!' her eyes flaſhing lightning, and a perturbation in her eager countenance, ſo charming!—'What have you taken 'up?'—And then, what for both my ears I durſt not have done to her, ſhe made no ſcruple to ſeize the ſtolen letter, though in my boſom.

What was to be done on ſo palpable a detection?—I claſped her hand, which had hold of the raviſhed paper, between mine: 'O my beloved creature!' ſaid I, 'can you think I have not *ſome* 'curioſity? Is it poſſible you can be 'thus for ever employed; and I, lov-'ing narrative letter-writing above 'every other ſpecies of writing, and 'admiring your talent that way, ſhould 'not (thus upon the dawn of my hap-'pineſs, as I preſume to hope) burn 'with a deſire to be admitted into ſo 'ſweet a correſpondence?'

'Let go my hand!'—ſtamping with her pretty foot: 'how dare you, Sir!—'At this rate, I ſee—Too plainly I 'ſee—' And more ſhe could not ſay: but, gaſping, was ready to faint with paſſion and affright; the devil a bit of her accuſtomed gentleneſs to be ſeen in her charming face, or to be heard in her muſical voice.

Having gone thus far, loth, very loth was I to loſe my prize—Once more I got hold of the rumpled-up letter!—'*Impudent man!*' were her words: ſtamping again. '*For God's ſake,*' then it was. I let go my prize, leſt ſhe ſhould faint away: but had the pleaſure firſt to find my hand within both hers, ſhe trying to open my reluctant fingers. How near was my heart at that moment to my hand, throbbing to my fingers ends, to be thus familiarly, although angrily, treated by the charmer of my ſoul!

When ſhe had got it in her poſſeſſion, ſhe flew to the door. I threw myſelf in her way, ſhut it, and, in the humbleſt manner, beſought her to forgive me. And yet do you think the Harlowe-hearted charmer (notwithſtanding the agreeable annunciation I came in with) would forgive me?—No truly; but puſhing me rudely from the door, as if I had been nothing, [Yet do I love to try, ſo innocently to try, her ſtrength too!] ſhe gaining that force through paſſion, which I had loſt through fear, out ſhe ſhot to her own apartment; [Thank my ſtars ſhe could fly no further!] and as ſoon as ſhe entered it, in a paſſion ſtill, ſhe double-locked and double-bolted herſelf in. This my comfort, on reflection, that, upon a greater offence, it cannot be worſe.

I retreated to my own apartment, with my heart full: and, my man Will not being near me, gave myſelf a plaguy knock on the forehead with my double fiſt.

And now is my charmer ſhut up from me: refuſing to ſee me; refuſing her meals. She reſolves *not* to ſee me; that's more:—never again, if ſhe can help it; and *in the mind ſhe is in*—I hope ſhe has ſaid.

The dear creatures, whenever they quarrel with their humble ſervants, ſhould always remember this ſaving clauſe, that they may not be forſworn.

But, thinkeſt thou that I will not make it the ſubject of one of my firſt plots, to inform myſelf of the reaſon why all this commotion was neceſſary on ſo ſlight an occaſion as this would have been, were not the letters that paſs between theſe ladies of a treaſonable nature?

WEDNESDAY MORNING.

No admiſſion to breakfaſt, any more than to ſupper. I wiſh this lady is not a ſimpleton, after all.

I have ſent up in Capt. Mennell's name.

'A meſſage from Capt. Mennell, 'Madam.'

It won't do. She is of baby age. She cannot be—a Solomon, I was going to ſay, in every-thing. Solomon, Jack, was the wiſeſt man. But didſt ever hear who was the wiſeſt woman? I want a compariſon for this lady. Cunning women and witches we read of without number. But I fancy *wiſdom* never entered into the character of a woman. It is not a requiſite of the ſex. Women, indeed, make better ſovereigns than men: but why is that?—Becauſe the women-ſovereigns are governed by men; the men-ſovereigns by women.—Charming, by my ſoul! For hence we gueſs at the rudder by which both are ſteered.

But

But to putting wisdom out of the question, and to take *cunning* in; that is to say, to consider woman *as* a woman; what shall we do, if this lady has something extraordinary in her head? Repeated charges has she given to Wilson, by a particular messenger, to send any letter directed for her the moment it comes.

I must keep a good look-out. She is not now afraid of her brother's plot. I shan't be at all surprized, if Singleton calls upon Miss Howe, as the only person who *knows*, or is *likely to know*, where Miss Harlowe is; pretending to have affairs of importance, and of particular service to her, if he can but be admitted to her speech—Of compromise, who knows, from her brother?

Then will Miss Howe warn her to keep close. Then will my protection be again necessary. This will do, I believe. Any-thing from Miss Howe must.

Joseph Leman is a vile fellow with her, and my implement. Joseph, *honest* Joseph, as I call him, may hang himself. I have played him off enough, and have very little farther use for him. No need to wear one plot to the stumps, when I can find new ones every hour.

Nor blame me for the use I make of my talents. Who, that hath such, will let 'em be idle?

Well then, I will find a Singleton; that's all I have to do.

Instantly find one!—'Will!'

'Sir.'

'This moment call me hither thy 'cousin Paul Wheatly, just come from 'sea, whom thou wert recommending 'to my service, if I were to marry, 'and keep a pleasure-boat.'

Presto—Will's gone—Paul will be here presently. Presently will he be gone to Mrs. Howe's. If Paul be Singleton's mate, coming from his captain, it will do as well as if it were Singleton himself.

Sally, a little devil, often reproaches me with the slowness of my proceedings. But in a play does not the principal entertainment lie in the *first four acts?* Is not all in a manner over when you come to the *fifth?* And what a vulture of a man must he be, who sowses upon his prey, and in the same moment trusses and devours?

But to own the truth. I have overplotted myself. To make my work secure, as I thought, I have frighted the dear creature with the sight of my four Hottentots, and I shall be a long time, I doubt, before I can recover my lost ground. And then this cursed family at Harlowe Place have made her out of humour with *me*, with *herself*, and with *all the world*, but Miss Howe, who no doubt, is continually adding difficulties to my other difficulties.

I am very unwilling to have recourse to measures which these dæmons below are continually urging me to take; because I am sure, that, at last, I shall be brought to make her legally mine.

One compleat trial over, and I think I will do her noble justice.

* *

Well, Paul's gone—Gone already—Has all his lessons. A notable fellow!—Lord W.'s necessary-man was Paul before he went to sea. A more sensible rogue Paul than Joseph! Not such a pretender to piety neither, as the other. At what a price have I bought that Joseph! I believe I must punish the rascal at last: but must let him marry first: then (though that may be punishment enough) I shall punish two at once in the man and his wife. And how richly does Betty deserve punishment for her behaviour to my goddess?

But now I hear the rusty hinges of my beloved's door give me creaking invitation. My heart creaks and throbs with respondent trepidations: whimsical enough though! For what relation has a lover's heart to a rusty pair of hinges? But they are the hinges that open and shut the door of my beloved's bedchamber. Relation enough in that.

I hear not the door shut again. I shall receive her commands I hope anon. What signifies her keeping me thus at a distance? She must be mine, let me do or offer what I will. Courage whenever I assume, all is over: for should she think of escaping from hence, whither can she fly to avoid me? Her parents will not receive her. Her uncles will not entertain her. Her beloved Norton is in their direction, and cannot. Miss Howe dare not. She has not one friend in town but me—Is entirely a stranger to the town. And what then is the matter with me, that I should

should be thus unaccountably overawed and tyrannized over by a dear creature who wants only to know how impossible it is that she should escape me, in order to be as humble to me, as she is to her persecuting relations!

Should I even make the grand attempt, and fail, and should she hate me for it, her hatred can be but temporary. She has already incurred the censure of the world. She must therefore chuse to be mine, for the sake of soldering up her reputation in the eye of that imprudent world. For, who that knows me, and knows that she has been in my power, though but for twenty-four hours, will think her spotless as to fact, let her inclination be what it will? And then *human nature* is such a well known rogue, that every man and woman judges by what each knows of him or herself, that *inclination* is no more to be trusted, where an opportunity is given, than *I* am; especially where a woman young and blooming loves a man well enough to go off with him; for such will be the world's construction in the present case.

She calls her maid Dorcas. No doubt, that I may hear her harmonious voice, and to give me an opportunity to pour out my soul at her feet; to renew all my vows; and to receive her pardon for the past offence: and then, with what pleasure shall I begin upon a new score, and afterwards wipe out that; and begin another, and another, till the *last* offence passes; and there can be *no other!* And once, after that, to be forgiven, will be to be forgiven for ever.

* *

The door is again shut. Dorcas tells me, that her lady denies to admit me to dine with her; a favour I had ordered the wench to beseech her to grant me, the next time she saw her—Not uncivilly, however, denies—Coming to by degrees! Nothing but the last offence, the honest wench tells me, in the language of her principals below, will do with her. The last offence is meditating. Yet this vile recreant heart of mine plays me booty.

But here I conclude; though the tyranness leaves me nothing to do, but to read, write, and fret.

Subscription is formal between us. Besides, I am so much hers, that I cannot say how much I am thine or any other person's.

LETTER X.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

TUESDAY, MAY 9.

IF, my dear, you approve of the application to my uncle Harlowe, I wish it may be made as soon as possible. We are quite out again. I have shut myself up from him. The offence indeed not *very* great—And yet it is too. He had like to have got a letter. One of yours. But never will I write again, or re-peruse my papers, in an apartment where he thinks himself entitled to come. He did not read a line of it. Indeed he did not. So don't be uneasy. And depend upon future caution.

'Thus it was. The sun being upon my closet, and Mr. Lovelace abroad—

She then gives Miss Howe an account of his coming by surprize upon her: of his fluttering speech; of his bold address; of her struggle with him for the letter, &c.

And now, my dear, *proceeds she*, I am more and more convinced, that I am too much in his power to make it prudent to stay with him. And if my friends *will* but give me hope, I will resolve to abandon him for ever.

O my dear! he is a fierce, a foolish, an insolent creature!—And in truth, I hardly expect, that we *can* accommodate. How much unhappier am I already with him, than my mother ever was with my father after marriage! Since (and that without any reason, any pretence in the world for it) he is for breaking my spirit *before* I am his; and while I am, or ought to be [O my folly, that I am not!] in my own power.

Till I can know whether my friends will give me hope or not, I must do what I never studied to do before in any case; that is, try to keep this difference open: and yet it will make me look *little in my own eyes*; because I shall mean by it more than I can own. But this is one of the consequences of a step

a ſtep I ſhall ever deplore! The natural fruits of all engagements, where the minds are unpaired—*diſ-paired*, in my caſe may I ſay.

Let this evermore be my caution to individuals of my ſex—Guard your eye: 'twill ever be in a combination againſt your judgment. If there are two parts to be taken, it will for ever, traitor as it is, take the wrong one.

If you aſk me, my dear, how this caution befits me? let me tell you a ſecret which I have but very lately found out upon ſelf-examination, although you ſeem to have made the diſcovery long ago; that had not my fooliſh eye been too much attached, I had not taken the pains to attempt, ſo officiouſly as I did, the prevention of miſchief between him and ſome of my family, which firſt induced the correſpondence between us, and was the occaſion of bringing the apprehended miſchief with double weight upon himſelf. My vanity and conceit, as far as I know, might have part in the inconſiderate meaſure: for does it not look as if I thought myſelf more capable of obviating difficulties, than any-body elſe of my family?

But you muſt not, my dear, ſuppoſe my heart to be ſtill a confederate with my eye. That deluded eye now clearly ſees it's fault, and the miſled heart deſpiſes it for it. Hence the application I am making to my uncle: hence it is, that I can ſay, (I think truly) that I would atone for my fault at any rate, even by the ſacrifice of a limb or two, if that would do.

Adieu, my deareſt friend!—May your heart never know the hundredth part of the pain mine at preſent feels! prays *your*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LETTER XI.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 10.

I *Will* write! No *man* ſhall write for me*. No *woman* ſhall hinder me from writing. Surely I am of age to diſtinguiſh between reaſon and caprice. I am not writing to a man, am I?—If I were carrying on a correſpondence with a fellow, of whom my mother diſapproved, and whom it might be improper for me to encourage, my own honour and my duty would engage my obedience. But as the caſe is ſo widely different, not a word more on this ſubject, I beſeech you!

I much approve of your reſolution to leave this wretch, if you can make up with your uncle.

I hate the man—Moſt heartily do I hate him, for his teazing ways. The very reading of your account of them teazes me almoſt as much as they can you. May you have encouragement to fly the fooliſh wretch!

I have other reaſons to wiſh you may: for I have juſt made an acquaintance with one who knows a vaſt deal of his private hiſtory. The man is really a villain, my dear! an execrable one! if all be true that I have heard: and yet I am promiſed *other* particulars. I do aſſure you, my dear friend, that had he a dozen lives, he might have forfeited them all, and been dead *twenty crimes* ago.

If ever you condeſcend to talk familiarly with him again, aſk him after Miſs Betterton, and what became of her. And if he ſhuffle and prevaricate as to her, queſtion him about Miſs Lockyer.—O my dear, the man's a villain!

I will have your uncle ſounded, as you deſire, and that out of hand. But yet I am afraid of the ſucceſs; and this for ſeveral reaſons. 'Tis hard to ſay what the ſacrifice of your eſtate would do with ſome people: and yet I muſt not, when it comes to the teſt, permit you to make it.

As your Hannah continues ill, I would adviſe you to try to attach Dorcas to your intereſt. Have you not been impolitickly ſhy of her?

I wiſh you could come at ſome of his letters. Surely a man of his negligent character cannot be always guarded. If *he be*, and if you cannot engage *your* ſervant, I ſhall ſuſpect them both. Let him be called upon at a ſhort warning when he is writing, or when he has papers lying about, and ſo ſurprize him into negligence.

Such enquiries, I know, are of the

* Clariſſa propoſes *Mr. Hickman* to write for Miſs Howe. See Vol. III. Letter LXIX. Parag. 5, & ult.

ſame

ſame nature with thoſe we make at an inn in travelling, when we look into every corner and cloſet for fear of a villain; yet ſhould be frighted out of our wits, were we to find one. But 'tis better to detect ſuch a one when awake and up, than to be attacked by him when in bed and aſleep.

I am glad you have your cloaths. But no money! No books, but a *Spira*, a *Drexelius*, and a *Practice of Piety!* Thoſe who ſent the latter, ought to have kept it for themſelves—But I muſt hurry myſelf from this ſubject.

You have exceedingly alarmed me by what you hint of his attempt to get one of my letters. I am aſſured by my new informant, that he is the head of a gang of wretches, (thoſe he brought you among, no doubt, were ſome of them) who join together to betray innocent creatures, and to ſupport one another afterwards by violence; and were he to come at the knowledge of the freedoms I take with him, I ſhould be afraid to ſtir out without a guard.

I am ſorry to tell you, that I have reaſon to think, that your brother has not laid aſide his fooliſh plot. A ſun-burnt, ſailor-looking fellow was with me juſt now, pretending great ſervice to you from Captain Singleton, could he be admitted to your ſpeech. I pleaded ignorance as to the place of your abode. The fellow was too well inſtructed for me to get any-thing out of him.

I wept for two hours inceſſantly on reading yours, which incloſed that from your couſin Morden*. My deareſt creature, do not deſert yourſelf. Let your Anna Howe obey the call of that friendſhip which has united us as one ſoul, and endeavour to give you conſolation.

I wonder not at the melancholy reflections you ſo often caſt upon yourſelf in your letters, for the ſtep you have been forced upon on one hand, and tricked into on the other. A ſtrange fatality! *As if it were deſigned to ſhew the vanity of all human prudence.* I wiſh, my dear, as you hint, that both you and I have not *too much prided ourſelves in a perhaps too conſcious ſuperiority over others.* But I will ſtop —How apt are weak minds to look out for judgments in any extraordinary event! 'Tis ſo far right that it is better, and ſafer, and juſter, to arraign ourſelves, or our deareſt friends, than Providence; which muſt always have wiſe ends to anſwer in it's diſpenſations.

But do not talk, as in one of your former, of being a warning *only*†—You will be as excellent an example, as ever you hoped to be, as well as a warning: and that will make your ſtory, to all that ſhall come to know it, of double efficacy. For were it that ſuch a merit as yours could not enſure to herſelf noble and generous uſage from a libertine heart, who will expect any tolerable behaviour from men of his character?

If you think yourſelf inexcuſable for taking a ſtep that put you into the way of deluſion, *without any intention to go off with him*, what muſt thoſe giddy creatures think of themſelves, who, without half your provocations and inducements, and without any regard to decorum, leap walls, drop from windows, and ſteal away from their parents houſe, to the ſeducer's bed, in the ſame day?

Again, if you are ſo ready to accuſe yourſelf for diſpenſing with the prohibitions of the moſt unreaſonable parents, which yet were but half-prohibitions at firſt; what ought thoſe to do, who wilfully ſhut their ears to the advice of the moſt reaſonable; and that, perhaps, where apparent ruin, or *undoubted inconvenience*, is the conſequence of the *predetermined* raſhneſs?

And laſtly, to all who will know your ſtory, you will be an excellent *example* of watchfulneſs, and of that caution and reſerve by which a prudent perſon who has been ſuppoſed to be a little miſled, endeavours to mend her error; and, never once loſing ſight of her duty, does all in her power to recover the path ſhe has been rather driven out of, than choſen to ſwerve from.

Come, come, my deareſt friend, conſider but theſe things; and ſteadily, without deſponding, purſue your earneſt purpoſes to amend what you think has been amiſs; and it may not be a misfortune in the end, that you have erred; eſpecially as ſo little of your will was in your error.

And indeed I muſt ſay that I uſe the words *miſled*, and *error*, and ſuch-like,

* See Letter VII. † See Vol. III. Letter XXIV.

only

only in compliment to your own too ready self-accusations, and to the opinion of one to whom I owe duty: for I think in my conscience, that every part of your conduct is defensible; and that those only are blameable who have no other way to clear themselves but by condemning you.

I expect, however, that such melancholy reflections as drop from your pen but too often, will mingle with all your future pleasures, were you to marry Lovelace, and were he to make the best of husbands.

You was immensely happy, above the happiness of a mortal creature, before you knew him: every-body almost worshipped you: envy itself, which has of late reared up it's venomous head against you, was awed by your superior worthiness, into silence and admiration. You was the soul of every company where you visited. Your elders have I seen declining to offer their opinions upon a subject till you had delivered yours; often to save themselves the mortification of retracting *theirs*, when they heard *yours*. Yet, in all this, your sweetness of manners, your humility and affability, caused the subscription every-one made to your sentiments, and to your superiority, to be equally unfeigned and unhesitating; for they saw that their applause, and the preference they gave you to themselves, subjected not themselves to insults, nor exalted you into any visible triumph over them; for you had always something to say on every point you carried that raised the yielding heart, and left every-one pleased and satisfied with themselves, though they carried not off the palm.

Your works were shewed or referred to wherever fine works were talked of. Nobody had any but an inferior and second-hand praise for diligence, for œconomy, for reading, for writing, for memory, for facility in learning every-thing laudable, and even for the more envied graces of person and dress, and an all-surpassing elegance in both, where you were known, and those subjects talked of.

The poor blessed you every step you trod: the rich thought you their honour, and took a pride that they were not obliged to descend from their own class for an example that did credit to it.

Though all men wished for you, and sought you, young as you were; yet, had not those who were brought to address you, been encouraged out of forbid and spiteful views, not one of them would have dared to lift up his eyes to you.

Thus happy in all about you, thus making happy all within your circle, could you think that nothing would happen to you, to convince you, *that you were not to be exempted from the common lot?*—To convince you, *that you were not absolutely perfect*; and that *you must not expect to pass through life without trial, temptation, and misfortune?*

Indeed it must be owned that no trial, no temptation, worthy of your virtue, and of your prudence, could well have attacked you sooner, because of your tender years, nor more effectually than those heavy ones, under which you struggle; since it must be allowed, that your equanimity and foresight made you superior to common accidents; for are not most of the troubles that fall to the lot of common mortals brought upon themselves either by their *too large desires*, or *too little deserts?*—Cases, both, from which you stood exempt.—It was therefore to be some *man*, or some *worse spirit in the shape of one*, that, formed on purpose, was to be sent to invade you; while as many other such spirits as there are persons in your family, were permitted to take possession, severally, in one dark hour, of the heart of every one of it, there to sit perching, perhaps, and directing every motion to the motions of the seducer without, in order to irritate, to provoke, to push you forward *to meet him*.

Upon the whole, there seems, as I have often said, to have been a kind of fate in your error, if it *were* an error; and this perhaps admitted *for the sake of a better example to be collected from your* SUFFERINGS, *than could have been given, had you never erred*: for, my dear, the time of ADVERSITY *is your* SHINING-TIME. I see it evidently, that adversity must call forth graces and beauties which could not have been brought to light in a run of that prosperous fortune, which attended you from your cradle till now; admirably as you *became*, and, as we all thought, greatly as you *deserved* that prosperity.

All the matter is, the trial must be grievous to you. It is to *me:* it is to all who love you, and looked upon you as one set aloft to be admired and imitated, and not as a mark, as you have lately found, for Envy to shoot it's shafts at.

Let what I have written above have it's due weight with you, my dear; and then, as warm imaginations are not without a mixture of enthusiasm, your Anna Howe, who, on re-perusal of it, imagines it to be in a style superior to her usual style, will be ready to flatter herself that she has been in a manner inspired with the hints that have comforted and raised the dejected heart of her suffering friend; who, from such hard trials, in a bloom so tender, may find at times her spirits sunk too low to enable her to pervade the surrounding darkness, which conceals from her the hopeful dawning of the better day which awaits her.

I will add no more at present, than that I am *your ever-faithful and affectionate*

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

FRIDAY, MAY 12.

I Must be silent, my exalted friend, under praises that oppress my heart with a consciousness of not deserving them; at the same time that the generous design of those praises raises and comforts it: for it is a charming thing to stand high in the opinion of those we love; and to find that there are souls that can carry their friendships beyond accidents, beyond body, and ties of blood. Whatever, my dearest creature, is *my* shining-time, the time of a *friend's* adversity is *yours*. And it would be almost a fault in me to regret those afflictions, which give you an opportunity so gloriously to exert those qualities, which not only ennoble our sex, but dignify human nature.

But let me proceed to subjects less agreeable.

I am sorry you have reason to think Singleton's projects are not at an end. But who knows what the sailor had to propose?—Yet had any good been intended me, this method would hardly have been fallen upon.

Depend upon it, my dear, your letters shall be safe.

I have made a handle of Mr. Lovelace's bold attempt and freedom, as I told you I would, to keep him ever since at a distance, that I may have an opportunity to see the success of the application to my uncle, and to be at liberty to embrace any favourable overtures that may arise from it. Yet he has been very importunate, and twice brought Mr. Mennel from Mrs. Fretchville to talk about the house.—*If I should be obliged to make up with him again, I shall think I am always doing myself a spite.*

As to what you mention of his newly-detected crimes; and your advice to attach Dorcas to my interest; and to come at some of his letters; these things will require more or less of my attention, as I may hope favour or not from my uncle Harlowe.

I am sorry that my poor Hannah continues ill. Pray, my dear, inform yourself, and let me know, whether she wants any-thing that befits her case.

I will not close this letter till to-morrow is over; for I am resolved to go to church; and this as well for the sake of my duty, as to see, if I am at liberty to go out when I please without being attended or accompanied.

SUNDAY, MAY 14.

I HAVE not been able to avoid a short debate with Mr. Lovelace. I had ordered a coach to the door. When I had notice that it was come, I went out of my chamber to go to it; but met him dressed on the stairs-head with a book in his hand, but without his hat and sword. He asked with an air very solemn, yet respectful, if I were going abroad. I told him, I was. He desired leave to attend me, if I were going to church. I refused him. And then he complained heavily of my treatment of him; and declared, that he would not live such another week as the past, for the world.

I owned to him very frankly, that I had made an application to my friends; and that I was resolved to keep myself to myself till I knew the issue of it.

He coloured, and seemed surprized. But checking himself in something he was

was going to say, he pleaded my danger from Singleton, and again desired to attend me.

And then he told me, that Mrs. Fretchville had desired to continue a fortnight longer in the house. 'She 'found,' said he, 'that I was unable 'to determine about entering upon it; 'and now who knows *when* such a 'vapourish creature will come to a re'solution? This, Madam, has been 'an unhappy week; for had I not 'stood upon such bad terms with you, '*you might have been now mistress of* '*that house*; and probably had my 'cousin Montague, if not Lady Bet'ty, actually with you.'

'And so, Sir, taking all you say 'for granted, your cousin Montague 'cannot come to Mrs. Sinclair's? 'What, pray, is her objection to Mrs. 'Sinclair's? Is this house fit for me to 'live in a month or two, and not fit 'for any of your relations for a few 'days?—And Mrs. Fretchville has '*taken more time too!*'—Then, pushing by him, I hurried down stairs.

He called to Dorcas to bring him his sword and hat; and following me down into the passage, placed himself between me and the door; and again desired leave to attend me.

Mrs. Sinclair came out at that instant, and asked me, if I did not chuse a dish of chocolate?

'I wish, Mrs. Sinclair,' said I, 'you would take this man in with you 'to your chocolate. I don't know 'whether I am at liberty to stir out 'without his leave or not.'

Then turning to him, I asked, If he kept me there his prisoner?

Dorcas just then bringing him his sword and hat, he opened the street-door, and taking my reluctant hand, led me, in a very obsequious manner, to the coach. People passing by, stopt, stared, and whispered—But he is so graceful in his person and dress, that he generally takes every eye.

I was uneasy to be so gazed at; and he stepped in after me, and the coachman drove to St. Paul's.

He was very full of assiduities all the way; while I was as reserved as possible: and when I returned, dined, as I had done the greatest part of the week, by myself.

He told me, upon my resolving to do so, that although he would continue his passive observance till I knew the issue of my application; yet I must expect, that *then* I should not rest one moment till I had fixed his happy day: for that his very soul was fretted with my slights, resentments, and delays.

A wretch! when I can say, to my infinite regret, on a *double* account, that all he complains of is owing to himself!

O that I may have good tidings from my uncle!

Adieu, my dearest friend!—This shall lie ready for an exchange, (as I hope for one to-morrow from you) that will decide, as I may say, the destiny of *your*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LETTER XIII.

MISS HOWE, TO MRS. JUDITH NORTON.

THURSDAY, MAY 11.

GOOD MRS. NORTON,

CANNOT you, without naming *me* as an adviser, who am hated by the family, contrive a way to let Mrs. Harlowe know, that in an accidental conversation with me, you had been assured, that my beloved friend pines after a reconciliation with her relations? That she has hitherto, in hopes of it, refused to enter into any obligation that shall be in the least an hindrance to it: that she would fain avoid giving Mr. Lovelace a right to make her family uneasy in relation to her grandfather's estate: that all she wishes for still is to be indulged in her choice of a single life, and, on that condition, would make her father's pleasure hers with regard to that estate: that Mr. Lovelace is continually pressing her to marry him; and all his friends likewise: but that I am sure, she has so little liking to the man, because of his faulty morals, and of the antipathy of her relations to him, that if she had any hope given her of a reconciliation, she would forego all thoughts of him, and put herself into her father's protection. But that their resolution must be speedy; for otherwise she would find herself obliged to

give way to his preſſing entreaties; and it might then be out of her power to prevent diſagreeable litigations.

I do aſſure you, Mrs. Norton, upon my honour, that our deareſt friend knows nothing of this procedure of mine: and therefore it is proper to acquaint you, in confidence, with my grounds for it.—Theſe are they.

She had deſired me to let Mr. Hickman drop hints to the above effect to her uncle Harlowe; but indirectly as from *himſelf*, leſt, if the application ſhould not be attended with ſucceſs, and Mr. Lovelace (who already takes it ill, that he has ſo little of her favour) come to know it, ſhe may be deprived of *every* protection, and be perhaps ſubjected to great inconveniences from ſo haughty a ſpirit.

Having this authority from her, and being very ſolicitous about the ſucceſs of the application, I thought, that if the weight of ſo good a wife, mother, and ſiſter, as Mrs. Harlowe is known to be, were thrown into the ſame ſcale with that of Mr. John Harlowe, (ſuppoſing he *could* be engaged) it could hardly fail of making a due impreſſion.

Mr. Hickman will ſee Mr. John Harlowe to-morrow: by that time you may ſee Mrs. Harlowe. If Mr. Hickman finds the old gentleman favourable, he will tell him, that you will have ſeen Mrs. Harlowe upon the ſame account; and will adviſe him to join in conſultation with her how beſt to proceed to melt the moſt obdurate hearts in the world.

This is the fair ſtate of the matter, and my true motive for writing to you. I leave all therefore to your diſcretion; and moſt heartily wiſh ſucceſs to it; being of opinion that Mr. Lovelace cannot poſſibly deſerve our admirable friend: nor indeed know I the man who does.

Pray acquaint me by a line of the reſult of your interpoſition. If it prove not ſuch as may be reaſonably hoped for, our dear friend ſhall know nothing of this ſtep from me; and pray let her not from you. For, in that caſe, it would only give deeper grief to a heart already too much afflicted. I am, dear and worthy Mrs. Norton, *your true friend*,

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XIV.

MRS. NORTON, TO MISS HOWE.

SATURDAY, MAY 13.

DEAR MADAM,

MY heart is almoſt broken to be obliged to let you know, that ſuch is the ſituation of things in the family of my ever-dear Miſs Harlowe, that there can be at preſent no ſucceſs expected from any application in her favour. Her poor mother is to be pitied. I have a moſt affecting letter from her; but muſt not communicate it to you; and ſhe forbids me to let it be known that ſhe writes upon the ſubject; although ſhe is compelled, as it were, to do it, for the eaſe of her own heart. I mention it therefore in confidence.

I hope in God that my beloved young lady has preſerved her honour inviolate. I hope there is not a man breathing, who could attempt a ſacrilege ſo deteſtable. I have no apprehenſion of a failure in a virtue ſo eſtabliſhed. God for ever keep ſo pure a heart out of the reach of ſurprizes and violence! Eaſe, dear Madam, I beſeech you, my over-anxious heart, by one line, by the bearer, although but by *one* line, to acquaint me, (as ſurely you can) that her honour is unſullied.—If it be not, adieu to all the comforts this life can give: ſince none will it be able to afford *to the poor*

JUDITH NORTON.

LETTER XV.

MISS HOWE, TO MRS. JUDITH NORTON.

SATURDAY EVENING, MAY 13.

DEAR GOOD WOMAN,

YOUR beloved's honour is inviolate!—*Muſt* be inviolate! And *will* be ſo, in ſpite of men and devils. Could I have had hope of a reconciliation, all my view was, that ſhe ſhould not have had this man.—All that can be ſaid now, is, ſhe muſt run the riſque of a bad huſband: ſhe, of whom no man living is worthy!

You pity her mother—So do not *I!* I pity no mother, that puts it out of her power

power to shew maternal love, and humanity, in order to patch up for herself a precarious and sorry quiet, which every blast of wind shall disturb.

I hate tyrants in every form and shape: but paternal and maternal tyrants are the worst of all; for they can have no bowels.

I repeat, that I pity *none* of them. Our beloved friend *only* deserves pity. She had never been in the hands of this man, but for them. She is quite blameless. You don't know all her story. Were I to tell you that she had no intention to go off with this man, it would avail her nothing. It would only serve to condemn, with those who drove her to extremities, *him*, who now must be her refuge. I am *your sincere friend and servant*,

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XVI.

MRS. HARLOWE, TO MRS. NORTON.

[NOT COMMUNICATED TILL THE LETTERS CAME TO BE COLLECTED.]

SATURDAY, MAY 13.

I Return an answer in writing, as I promised, to your communication. But take no notice either to my Bella's Betty, (who I understand sometimes visits you) or to the poor wretch herself, nor to any-body, that I do write. I charge you don't. My heart is full: writing may give some vent to my griefs, and perhaps I may write what lies most upon my heart, without confining myself strictly to the present subject.

You know how dear this ungrateful creature ever was to us all. You know how sincerely we joined with every-one of those who ever had seen her, or conversed with her, to praise and admire her; and exceeded in our praise even the bounds of that modesty, which, because she was our own, should have restrained us; being of opinion, that to have been silent in the praise of so apparent a merit, must rather have argued blindness or affectation in us, than that we should incur the censure of vain partiality to our own.

When, therefore, any-body congratulated us on such a daughter, we received their congratulations without any diminution. If it was said, 'You 'are happy in this child,' we owned, that no parents ever were happier in a child. If more particularly, they praised her dutiful behaviour to us, we said, She knew not how to offend. If it was said, 'Miss Clarissa Harlowe has a wit 'and penetration beyond her years;' we, instead of disallowing it, would add—'And a judgment no less extraordinary 'than her wit.' If her prudence was praised, and a *forethought*, which every-one saw supplied what only *years* and *experience* gave to others; 'Nobody need to 'scruple taking lessons from Clarissa 'Harlowe,' was our proud answer.

Forgive me, O forgive me, my dear Norton—But I know you will; for yours, when good, was this child, and your glory as well as mine.

But have you not heard strangers, as she passed to and from church, stop to praise the angel of a creature, as they called her; when it was enough for those who knew who she was, to cry, '*Why*, '*it is Miss Clarissa Harlowe!*'—As if every-body were obliged to know, or to have heard of Clarissa Harlowe, and of her excellences. While, *accustomed to praise*, it was too *familiar to her*, to cause her to alter either her look or her pace.

For my own part, I could not stifle a pleasure, that had perhaps a faulty vanity for it's foundation, whenever I was spoken of, or addressed to, as the mother of so sweet a child: Mr. Harlowe and I, all the time, loving each other the better for the share each had in such a daughter.

Still, still indulge the fond, the overflowing heart of a mother! I could dwell for ever upon the remembrance of what she *was*, would but that remembrance banish from my mind what she *is!*

In *her* bosom, young as she was, could I repose all my griefs—Sure of receiving from *her* prudence advice as well as comfort; and both insinuated in so humble, in so dutiful a manner, that it was impossible to take those exceptions which the distance of years and character between a mother and a daughter would have made one apprehensive of from any other daughter. She was our glory when abroad, our delight when at home. Every-body was even covetous of her company; and we grudged

grudged her to our brothers Harlowe, and to our ſiſter and brother Hervey. No other contention among us, then, but who ſhould be next favoured by her. No chiding ever knew ſhe from us, but the chiding of lovers, when ſhe was for ſhutting herſelf up too long together from us, in purſuit of thoſe charming amuſements and uſeful employments, for which, however, the whole family was the better.

Our other children had reaſon (good children as they always were) to think themſelves neglected. But they likewiſe were ſo ſenſible of their ſiſter's ſuperiority, and of the honour ſhe reflected upon the whole family, that they confeſſed themſelves eclipſed, without envying the eclipſer. Indeed there was not any-body ſo equal with her, in their own opinions, as to envy what all aſpired but to emulate. The dear creature, you know, my Norton, gave an eminence to us all!

Then her acquirements. Her ſkill in muſick, her fine needleworks, her elegance in dreſs; for which ſhe was ſo much admired, that the neighbouring ladies uſed to ſay, that they need not fetch faſhions from London; ſince whatever Miſs Clariſſa Harlowe wore, was the *beſt* faſhion, becauſe her choice of *natural* beauties ſet thoſe of *art* far behind them. Her genteel eaſe, and fine turn of perſon; her deep reading, and theſe, joined to her open manners, and her chearful modeſty—O my good Norton, what a ſweet child was *once* my Clary Harlowe!

This, and more, *you* knew her to be: for many of her excellences were owing to yourſelf; and with the milk you gave her, you gave her what no other nurſe in the world could give her.

And do you think, my worthy woman, do you think, that the wilful lapſe of ſuch a child is to be forgiven? Can ſhe herſelf think, that ſhe deſerves not the ſevereſt puniſhment for the abuſe of ſuch talents as were entruſted to her?

Her fault was a fault of premeditation, of cunning, of contrivance. She has deceived every-body's expectations. Her whole ſex, as well as the family ſhe ſprung from, is diſgraced by it.

Would any-body ever have believed, that ſuch a young creature as this, who had by her advice ſaved even her overlively friend from marrying a fop, and a libertine, would herſelf have gone off with one of the vileſt and moſt notorious of libertines? A man whoſe character ſhe knew; and knew it to be worſe than the character of him from whom ſhe ſaved her friend; a man againſt whom ſhe was warned: one who had had her brother's life in his hands; and who conſtantly ſet our whole family at defiance.

Think for me, my good Norton; think what my unhappineſs muſt be, both as a wife and a mother. What reſtleſs days, what ſleepleſs nights; yet my own rankling anguiſh endeavoured to be ſmoothed over, to ſoften the anguiſh of fiercer ſpirits, and to keep them from blazing out to further miſchief! O this naughty, naughty girl! who *knew* ſo well what ſhe did; and who could look ſo far into conſequences, that we thought ſhe would have died, rather than have done as ſhe has done!

Her known character for prudence leaves her abſolutely without excuſe. How then can I offer to plead for her, if, through motherly indulgence, I would forgive her myſelf?—And have we not, moreover, ſuffered all the diſgrace that *can* befal us? Has not ſhe?

If *now* ſhe has ſo little liking to his morals, had ſhe not reaſon *before* to have *as* little? Or has ſhe ſuffered by them in her own perſon?—O my good woman! I doubt—I doubt—Will not the character of the man make one doubt an angel, if once in his power? The world will think the worſt. I am told it does. So likewiſe her father fears; her brother hears; and what can *I* do?

Our *antipathy* to him ſhe knew before, as well as his character. Theſe, therefore, cannot be *new motives* without a *new reaſon*.—O my dear Mrs. Norton, how ſhall *I*, how can *you*, ſupport ourſelves under the apprehenſions to which theſe thoughts lead!

He continually preſſing her, you ſay, *to marry him*; *his friends likewiſe*. She has reaſon, no doubt ſhe has reaſon, for this application to us: and her crime is gloſſed over, to bring her to us with new diſgrace! Whither, whither does one guilty ſtep lead the miſguided heart! —And now, truly, to have a ſtubborn ſpirit, we are only to be *founded*, that the application may be occaſionally retracted or denied!

Upon the whole: were I inclined to plead for her, it is *now* the moſt improper

proper of all times. *Now* that my brother Harlowe has discouraged (as he last night came hither on purpose to tell us) Mr. Hickman's insinuated application; and been applauded for it. *Now*, that my brother Antony is intending to carry his great fortune, through her fault, into another family—She expecting, no doubt, herself to be put into her grandfather's estate, in consequence of a reconciliation, and as a reward for her fault: and insisting still upon the same terms which she offered before, and which were rejected—Not through my fault, I am sure, rejected!

From all these things, you will return such an answer as the case requires. It might cost me the peace of my whole life, at this time, to move for her. God forgive her! If I do, nobody else will. And let it, for your own sake, as well as mine, be a secret that you and I have entered upon this subject. And I desire you not to touch upon it again but by particular permission: for, O my dear good woman, it sets my heart a bleeding in as many streams as there are veins in it!

Yet think me not impenetrable by a proper contrition and remorse—But what a torment is it to have a will without a power!

Adieu! adieu! God give us both comfort; and to the *once* dear—the *ever*-dear creature, (for can a mother forget her child?) repentance, deep repentance! And as little suffering as may befit His blessed will, and her grievous fault, prays *your real friend*,

CHARLOTTE HARLOWE.

LETTER XVII.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

SUNDAY, MAY 14.

HOW it is now, my dear, between you and Mr. Lovelace, I cannot tell. But wicked as the man is, I am afraid he must be your lord and master.

I called him by several very hard names in my last. I had but just heard of some of his vilenesses, when I sat down to write; so my indignation was raised. But on enquiry, and recollection, I find that the facts laid to his charge were all of them committed some time ago—not since he has had *strong* hopes of your favour.

This is saying something for him. His generous behaviour to the innkeeper's daughter, is a more recent instance to his credit; to say nothing of the universal good character he has as a kind landlord. And then I approve much of the motion he made to put you in possession of Mrs. Fretchville's house, while he continues at the other widow's, till you agree that one house should hold you. I wish this were done. Be sure you embrace this offer, (if you do not soon meet at the altar) and get one of his cousins with you.

Were you once married, I should think you cannot be very unhappy, though you may not be so happy with him as you deserve to be. The stake he has in his country, and his reversions; the care he takes of his affairs; his freedom from obligation; nay, his pride with your merit, must be a tolerable security for you, I should think. Though particulars of his wickedness, as they come to my knowledge, hurt and incense me; yet, after all, when I give myself time to reflect, all that I have heard of him to his disadvantage was comprehended in the general character given of him long ago, by Lord M.'s and his own dismissed bailiff*, and which was confirmed to me by Mrs. Fortescue, as I heretofore told you†, and to *you* by Mrs. Greme‡.

You can have nothing, therefore, I think, to be deeply concerned about, but his future good, and the bad example he may hereafter set to his own family. These, indeed, are very just concerns: but were you to *leave* him now, either *with* or *without* his consent, his fortune and alliances so considerable, his person and address so engaging, (every-one excusing you now on those accounts, and because of your relations follies) it would have a very ill appearance for your reputation. I cannot, therefore, on the most deliberate consideration, advise you to think of that, while you have no reason to doubt his honour. May eternal vengeance pursue the villain, if he give room for an apprehension of this nature!

Yet his teazing ways are intolerable:

* Vol. I. Page 16. † Ibid. Page 35, 36. ‡ Vol. III. Page 307.

his

his acquiescence with your slight delays, and his resignedness to the distance you now keep him at, (for a fault so much slighter as he must think, than the punishment) are unaccountable: he doubts your love of *him*, that is very probable; but you have reason to be surprized at *his* want of ardour; a blessing so great within his *reach*, as I may say.

By the time you have read to this place, you will have no doubt of what has been the issue of the conference between the *two gentlemen*. I am equally shocked, and enraged against them all. Against them *all*, I say; for I have tried your good Norton's weight with your mother, (though at first I did not intend to tell you so) to the same purpose as the gentleman sounded your uncle. Never were there such determined brutes in the world! Why should I mince the matter? Yet would I fain, methinks, make an exception for your mother.

Your uncle will have it, that you are ruined. He can believe every-thing bad of a creature, he says, who could run away with a man; with such a one especially as Lovelace. They *expected* applications from you, when some heavy distress had fallen upon you. But they are all resolved not to stir an inch in your favour; no, not to save your life!

My dearest soul, resolve to assert your right. Claim your own, and go and live upon it, as you ought. Then, if you marry not, how will the wretches creep to you, for your reversionary dispositions!

You were accused (as in your aunt's letter) of premeditation and contrivance in your escape. Instead of pitying *you*, the mediating person was called upon to pity *them*; who once, your uncle said, doated upon you: who took no joy but in your presence: who devoured your words as you spoke them: who trod over again your footsteps, as you walked before them.—And I know not what of this sort.

Upon the whole, it is now evident to me, and so it must be to you, when you read this letter, that you must be his. And the sooner you are so, the better. Shall we suppose that marriage is not in your power?—I cannot have patience to suppose that.

I am concerned, methinks, to know how you will do to condescend, (now you see you must be his) after you have kept him at such a distance; and for the revenge his pride may put him upon taking for it. But let me tell you, that if my going up, and sharing fortunes with you, will prevent such a noble creature from stooping too low; much more, were it likely to prevent your ruin; I would not hesitate a moment about it. What is the whole world to me, weighed against such a friend as you are? Think you, that any of the enjoyments of this life could be enjoyments to me, were you involved in calamities, from which I could either alleviate or relieve you, by giving up those enjoyments? And what in saying this, and acting up to it, do I offer you, but the fruits of a friendship your worth has created?

Excuse my warmth of *expression*. The warmth of my *heart* wants none. I am enraged at your relations; for, bad as what I have mentioned is, I have not told you all; nor now, perhaps, ever will. I am angry at my own mother's narrowness of mind, and at her indiscriminate adherence to old notions. And I am exasperated against your foolish, your *low-vanity'd* Lovelace. But let us stoop to take the wretch as he is, and make the best of him, since you are destined to stoop, to keep grovellers and worldlings in countenance. He has not been guilty of direct indecency to you. Nor *dare* he—Not so much of a devil as that comes to neither. Had he such villainous intentions, so much in his power as you are, they would have shewn themselves before now to such a penetrating and vigilant eye, and to such a pure heart as yours. Let us save the wretch then, if we can, though we soil our fingers in lifting him up from his dirt.

There is yet, to a person of your fortune and independence, a good deal to do, if you enter upon those terms which *ought* to be entered upon. I don't find, that he has once talked of settlements; nor yet of the licence. A foolish wretch! —But as your evil destiny has thrown you out of all other protection and mediation, you must be father, mother, uncle, to yourself; and enter upon the requisite points for yourself. It is hard upon you; but indeed you must. Your situation requires it. *What room for delicacy now?*—Or would you have *me* write to him? Yet that would be the same thing, as if you were to write yourself.

yourself. Yet write you should, I think, if you cannot speak. But speaking is certainly best: for words leave no traces; they pass as breath; and mingle with air; and may be explained with latitude. But the pen is a witness on record.

I know the gentleness of your spirit; I know the laudable pride of your heart; and the just notion you have of the dignity of our sex, in these delicate points. But once more, all this is nothing now: your honour is concerned that the dignity I speak of, should not be stood upon.

'Mr. Lovelace,' would I say; yet hate the foolish fellow for his low, his stupid pride, in wishing to triumph over the dignity of his own wife—'I am by 'your means deprived of every friend I 'have in the world. In what light am I 'to look upon *you?* I have well con-'sidered every-thing. You have made 'some people, much against my liking, 'think me a *wife:* others know I am '*not* married; nor do I desire any-body 'should believe I *am*. Do you think 'your being here in the same house with 'me can be to my reputation? You 'talked to me of Mrs. Fretchville's 'house.'—This will bring him to renew his last discourse on that subject, if he does not revive it of himself.—'If 'Mrs. Fretchville knows not her own 'mind, what is her house to me? You 'talked of bringing up your cousin 'Montague to bear me company: if 'my brother's schemes be your pretence 'for not going yourself to *fetch her*, you 'can *write* to her. I insist upon bring-'ing these two points to an issue: off or 'on, ought to be indifferent to *me*, if 'so to *them*.'

Such a declaration must bring all forward. There are twenty ways, my dear, that you would find out for another in your circumstances. He will disdain, from his native insolence, to have it thought he has *any-body* to consult. Well, then, will he not be obliged to declare himself? And if he *does*, no delays on your side, I beseech you. Give him the day. Let it be a short one. It would be derogating from your own merit, and *honour* too, let me tell you, even although he should not be so explicit as he ought to be, to seem but to doubt his meaning; and to wait for that explanation for which I should for ever despise him, if he makes it necessary. Twice already have you, my dear, if not oftener, *modestly'd away* such opportunities as you ought not to have slipt. As to settlements, if they come not in naturally, e'en leave them to his own justice, and to the justice of his family. And there's an end of the matter.

This is *my* advice: mend it as circumstances offer, and follow *your own*. But, indeed, my dear, this, or something like it, would I do. And let him tell me afterwards, if he dared or would, that he humbled down to his shoe-buckles the person it would have been his glory to exalt.

Support yourself, mean time, with reflections worthy of yourself. Though tricked into this man's power, you are not meanly subjugated to it. All his reverence you command, or rather, as I may say, inspire; since it was never known, that he had any reverence for aught that was good, till you was with him: and he professes now-and-then to be so awed and charmed by your example, as that the force of it shall reclaim him.

I believe you will have a difficult task to keep him to it: but the more will be your honour, if you effect his reformation: and it is my belief, that if you *can* reclaim this great, this specious deceiver, who has, morally speaking, such a number of years before him, you will save from ruin a multitude of innocents; for those seem to me to have been the prey for which he has spread his wicked snares. And who knows but, for this very purpose, principally, a person may have been permitted to swerve, whose heart or will never was in her error, and who has so much remorse upon her for having, as she thinks, erred at all?—Adieu, my dearest friend.

ANNA HOWE.

INCLOSED IN THE ABOVE.

I Must trouble you with my concerns, though your own are so heavy upon you. A piece of news I have to tell you. Your uncle Antony is disposed to marry. With *whom*, think you? With my mother. True, indeed. Your family know it. All is laid with redoubled malice at your door. And there the *old soul* himself lays it.

Take no notice of this intelligence,

not so much as in your letters to me, for fear of accidents.

I think it can't do. But were I to provoke my mother, that might afford a pretence. Else, I should have been with you before now, I fancy.

The first likelihood that appears to me of encouragement, I dismiss Hickman, that's certain. If my mother disoblige *me* in so important an article, I shan't think of obliging *her* in such another. It is impossible, surely, that the desire of *popping me off* to that honest man can be with such a view.

I repeat, that it cannot come to anything. But these *widows*—Then such a love in us all, both old and young, of being courted and admired!—And so irresistible to their *elderships* to be flattered, that all power is not over with them; but that they may still class and prank it with their daughters.—It vexed me heartily to have her tell me of this proposal with self-complaisant simperings; and yet she affected to speak of it, as if she had no intention to encourage it.

These antiquated batchelors (old before they believe themselves to be so) imagine, that when they have once persuaded *themselves* to think of the state, they have nothing more to do than to make their minds known to the woman.

Your uncle's overgrown fortune is, indeed, a bait; a tempting one. A saucy daughter to be got rid of! The memory of the father of that daughter not precious enough to weigh much!—But let him advance if he dare—Let her encourage—But I hope she won't.

Excuse me, my dear. I am nettled. They have *fearfully rumpled my gorget*. You'll think me faulty. So I won't put my name to this separate paper. Other hands may resemble mine. You did not see me write it.

LETTER XVIII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

MONDAY AFTERNOON, MAY 15.

NOW, indeed, it is evident, my best, my only friend, that I have but one choice to make. And now I do find, that I have carried my resentment against this man too far; since now I am to appear as if under an obligation to his patience with me for a conduct, which perhaps he will think (if not humoursome and childish) plainly demonstrative of my little esteem of him; but a *secondary* esteem at least, where before, his pride rather than his merit, had made him expect a *first*. O my dear! to be cast upon a man, that is not a *generous* man; that is, indeed, a *cruel* man! A man that is capable of creating a distress to a young creature, who by her evil destiny is thrown into his power; and then of *enjoying* it, as I may say! [I verily think I may say so of this savage!] — What a fate is mine!

You give me, my dear, good advice, as to the peremptory manner in which I ought to treat him: but do you consider to *whom* it is that you give it?—And then should I take it, and should he be capable of delay, I unprotected, desolate, nobody to fly to, in what a wretched light must I stand in his eyes; and, what is still as bad, in my own! O my dear, see you not, *as I do*, that the *occasion* for this my indelicate, my shocking situation, should never have been given by *me*, of all creatures; since I am unequal, utterly unequal, to the circumstances to which my inconsideration has reduced me! — What, *I* to challenge a man for a husband!—*I* to exert myself to quicken the delayer in his resolutions! And having, as you think, lost an opportunity, to begin to try to recal it, as *from myself*, and *for myself!* To *threaten* him, as I may say, into the marriage-state!—O my dear! if this be right to be done, how difficult is it, where modesty and self (or where pride, if you please) is concerned, to do that right? Or, to express myself in your words, to be father, mother, uncle, to myself!—Especially where one thinks a triumph over one is intended.

You say, you have tried Mrs. Norton's weight with my mother—Bad as the returns are which my application by Mr. Hickman has met with, you tell me, That you have not acquainted me with all the bad, nor now, perhaps, ever will. But why so, my dear? What *is* the bad, what *can* be the bad, which now you will never tell me of?—What worse, than renounce me! and for ever! My uncle, you say, believes me ruined: he declares, that he can believe everything bad of a creature who could run away

away with a man: and they have all made a reſolution, not to ſtir an inch in my favour; no, not to ſave my life.—Have you worſe than this, my dear, behind?—Surely my father has not renewed his dreadful malediction!—Surely, if ſo, my mother has not joined in it! Have my uncles given it their ſanction, and made it a family-act? *And themſelves thereby more really faulty, than even* THEY *ſuppoſe me to be, though I the cauſe of that greater fault in them?*—What, my dear, is this worſt, that you will leave for ever unrevealed?

O Lovelace! why comeſt thou not juſt now, while theſe black proſpects are before me? For now, couldſt thou look into my heart, wouldſt thou ſee a diſtreſs worthy of thy barbarous triumph!

* *

I WAS forced to quit my pen. And you ſay you have tried Mrs. Norton's weight with my mother?

What *is* done cannot be remedied: but I wiſh you had not taken a ſtep of this importance to me without firſt conſulting me. Forgive me, my dear, but I muſt tell you that that high-ſouled and noble friendſhip which you have ever avowed with ſo obliging and ſo uncommon a warmth, although it has been always the ſubject of my grateful admiration, has been often the ground of my apprehenſion, becauſe of it's unbridled fervour.

Well, but now to look forward, you are of opinion that I muſt be his: and that I cannot leave him with reputation to myſelf, whether with or without his conſent. I muſt, if ſo, make the beſt of the bad matter.

He went out in the morning; intending not to return to dinner, unleſs (as he ſent me word) I would admit him to dine with me.

I excuſed myſelf. The man, whoſe anger is now to be of ſuch high importance to me, was, it ſeems, diſpleaſed.

As he (as well as I) expected, that I ſhould receive a letter from you this day by Collins, I ſuppoſe he will not be long before he returns; and then, poſſibly, he is to be mighty ſtately, mighty *manniſh*, mighty *coy*, if you pleaſe! And then muſt I be very humble, very ſubmiſſive, and try to inſinuate myſelf into his good graces: with downcaſt eye, if not by ſpeech, beg his forgiveneſs for the diſtance I have ſo perverſely kept him at!—Yes, I warrant!—But I ſhall ſee how this behaviour will ſit upon me!—You have always raillied me upon my meekneſs, I think: well, then, I will try, if I can be ſtill meeker, ſhall I!—O my dear!

But let me ſit with my hands before me, all patience, all reſignation; for I think I hear him coming up. Or ſhall I roundly accoſt him, in the words, in the form, which you, my dear, preſcribed?

He is come in. He has ſent to me, all impatience, as Dorcas ſays, by his aſpect.—But I cannot, cannot ſee him!

MONDAY NIGHT.

THE contents of your letter, and my own heavy reflections, rendered me incapable of ſeeing this expecting man. The firſt word he aſked Dorcas, was, If I had received a letter ſince he had been out? She told me this; and her anſwer, that I had; and was faſting, and had been in tears ever ſince.

He ſent to deſire an interview with me.

I anſwered by her, That I was not very well. In the morning, if better, I would ſee him as ſoon as he pleaſed.

Very humble! was it not, my dear? Yet he was *too royal* to take it for humility; for Dorcas told me, he rubbed one ſide of his face impatiently; and ſaid a raſh word, and was out of humour; ſtalking about the room.

Half an hour after, he ſent again; deſiring very earneſtly, that I would admit him to ſupper with me. He would enter upon no ſubjects of converſation, but what I ſhould lead to.

So I ſhould have been at *liberty*, you ſee, to *court him!*

I again deſired to be excuſed.

Indeed, my dear, my eyes were ſwelled: I was very low-ſpirited; and could not think of entering all at once, after the diſtance I had kept him at for ſeveral days, into the freedom of converſation which the utter rejection I have met with from my relations, as well as your advice, has made neceſſary.

He ſent up to tell me, that as he heard I was faſting, if I would promiſe to eat ſome chicken which Mrs. Sinclair had ordered for ſupper, he would acquieſce —*Very kind in his anger! Is he not?*

I promiſed that I would. Can I be

more *preparatively* condescending?—How happy, I'll warrant, if I may meet him in a *kind* and *forgiving* humour!

I hate myself! But I won't be insulted. Indeed I won't for all this.

LETTER XIX.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

TUESDAY, MAY 16.

I Think once more, we seem to be in a kind of train; but through a storm. I will give you the particulars.

I heard him in the dining-room at five in the morning. I had rested very ill, and was up too. But opened not my door till six: when Dorcas brought me his request for my company.

He approached me, and taking my hand, as I entered the dining-room, 'I 'went not to bed, Madam, till two,' said he; 'yet slept not a wink. For 'God's sake, torment me not, as you 'have done for a week past.'

He paused. I was silent.

'At first,' proceeded he, 'I thought 'your resentment of a curiosity, in 'which I had been disappointed, could 'not be deep; and that it would go off 'of itself: but when I found, it was 'to be kept up till you knew the success of some new overtures which you 'had made, and which, complied with, 'might have deprived me of you for 'ever; how, Madam, could I support 'myself under the thoughts of having, 'with such an union of interests, made 'so little impression upon your mind in 'my favour?'

He paused again. I was still silent. He went on.

'I acknowledge that I have a *proud* 'heart, Madam. I cannot but hope 'for some instances of previous and preferable favour, from the lady I am 'ambitious to call mine; and that her 'choice of me should not appear, not 'flagrantly appear, directed by the perverseness of her selfish persecutors, who 'are my irreconcileable enemies.'

More to the same purpose he said. You know, my dear, the room he had given me to recriminate upon him in twenty instances. I did not spare him.

'Every one of these instances,' said I, (after I had enumerated them) 'convinces me of your *pride*, indeed, Sir, 'but not of your *merit*. I confess, that 'I have as much *pride* as you can have, 'although I hope it is of another kind 'than that you so *readily avow*. But 'if, Sir, you have the least mixture in 'yours, of that pride which may be expected, and thought laudable, in a 'man of your birth, alliances, and fortune, you should rather wish, I will 'presume to say, to promote what you 'call my pride, than either to suppress 'it, or to regret that I have it. It is *this* 'my acknowledged pride,' proceeded I, 'that induces me to tell you, Sir, that 'I think it beneath me to disown what 'have been my motives for declining, 'for some days past, any conversation 'with you, or visit from Mr. Mennell, 'that might lead to points out of my 'power to determine upon, until I 'heard from my uncle Harlowe; whom, 'I confess, I have caused to be sounded, 'whether I might be favoured with his 'interest to obtain for me a reconciliation with my friends, upon terms 'which I had caused to be proposed.'

'I know not,' said he, 'and suppose 'must not presume to ask, what these 'terms were. But I can but too well 'guess at them; and that I was to have 'been the preliminary sacrifice. But 'you must allow me, Madam, to say, 'that as much as I admire the noble-'ness of your sentiments in general, 'and in particular that *laudable* pride 'which you have spoken of; I wish 'that I could compliment you with 'such an *uniformity* in it, as had set 'you as much above all submission to 'minds implacable and unreasonable, '(I hope I may, without offence, say, 'that your brother's and sister's are 'such) as it has above all favour and 'condescension to me.'

'*Duty* and *nature*, Sir, call upon me 'to make the submissions you speak of: 'there is a father, there is a mother, 'there are uncles in the one case, to 'justify and demand those submissions. 'What, pray, Sir, can be pleaded for 'the *condescension*, as you call it? Will 'you say, your merits, either with regard to *them*, or to *myself*, may?'

'This, Madam, to be said, after the 'persecutions of those relations! After 'what you have suffered! After what 'you have made me hope! Let me, my 'dearest creature, ask you, (we have 'been talking of *pride*) What sort of 'pride must *his* be, which can dispense

'with

'with inclination and preference in the 'lady whom he adores?—What must 'be that love——'

'*Love*, Sir! who talks of *love?*—'Was not *merit* the thing we were 'talking of?—Have *I* ever professed, 'have *I* ever required of *you* professions 'of a passion of that nature!—But there 'is no end of these debatings; each *so* 'faultless, each *so* full of self——'

'I do not think myself *faultless*, Ma-'dam—But——'

'*But* what, Sir!—Would you ever-'more argue with me, as if you were 'a child?—Seeking palliations, and 'making promises?—Promises of what, 'Sir? Of being in future the man it is 'a shame a gentleman is not?—Of be-'ing the man——'

'Good God!' interrupted he, with eyes lifted up, 'if *thou* wert to be thus 'severe——'

'Well, well, Sir,' [impatiently] 'I 'need only to observe, that all this vast 'difference in sentiment shews how un-'paired our minds are—So let us——'

'Let us *what*, Madam!—My soul 'is rising into tumults!' And he look-ed so wildly, that I was a good deal ter-rified—'Let us *what*, Madam!'

I was, however, resolved not to de-sert myself—'Why, Sir, let us resolve 'to quit every regard for each other—'Nay, flame not out—I am a poor weak-'minded creature in some things: but 'where what I *should be*, or not deserve 'to live if I *am not*, is in the question, 'I have a great and invincible spirit, 'or my own conceit betrays me—Let 'us resolve to quit every regard for 'each other that is more than civil. '*This* you may depend upon; I will 'never marry any other man. I have 'seen enough of your sex; at least of '*you*.—A single life shall ever be *my* 'choice; while I will leave you at li-'berty to pursue *your own*.'

'Indifference—*worse* than indiffe-'rence!' said he, in a passion.

Interrupting him—'Indifference let 'it be—You have not (in my opinion 'at least) deserved that it should be 'other: if you have in *your own*, you 'have cause (at least your *pride* has) to 'hate me for mis-judging you.'

'Dearest, dearest creature!' snatch-ing my hand with fierceness, 'let me 'beseech you to be *uniformly* noble!—'*Civil regards*, Madam!—*Civil re-*'*gards!*—Can you so expect to narrow 'and confine such a passion as mine!'

'Such a passion as yours, Mr. Love-'lace, *deserves* to be narrowed and 'confined. It is either the passion *you* 'do not think it, or *I* do not. I ques-'tion whether your mind is capable of 'being *so* narrowed and *so* widened, as 'is necessary to make it be what I wish 'it to be. Lift up your hands and your 'eyes, Sir, in silent wonder, if you 'please; but what does that wonder 'express, what does it convince me of, 'but that we are not born for one ano-'ther?'

'By my soul,' said he, and grasped my hand with an eagerness that hurt it, 'we *were* born for one another: you '*must* be mine—You *shall* be mine,' [and put his other arm round me] 'al-'though my damnation were to be the 'purchase!'

I was still more terrified—'Let me 'leave you, Mr. Lovelace,' said I; 'or do you be gone from me. Is the 'passion you boast of to be thus shock-'ingly demonstrated?'

'You must not go, Madam!—You 'must not leave me in anger.'

'I will return—I will return—When 'you can be less violent—less shock-'ing!'

And he let me go.

The man quite frighted me; inso-much that when I got into my chamber, I found a sudden flow of tears a great relief to me.

In half an hour, he sent a little billet, expressing his concern for the vehe-mence of his behaviour, and prayed to see me.

I went. Because I could not help my-self, I went.

He was full of his excuses.—O my dear! what would you, even *you*, do with such a man as this; and in my situation?

It was very possible for him now, he said, to account for the workings of a beginning phrenzy. For his part, he was near distraction. All last week to suffer as he had suffered; and now to talk of *civil regards* only, when he had hoped from the nobleness of my mind—

'Hope what you will,' interrupted I; 'I must insist upon it, that our minds 'are by no means suited to each other. 'You have brought me into difficulties.

'I am

'I am deserted by every friend but 'Miss Howe. My true sentiments I 'will not conceal—It is against my 'will, that I must submit to owe pro-'tection from a brother's projects, 'which Miss Howe thinks are not 'given over, to you, who have brought 'me into these streights: *not* with my 'own concurrence brought me into 'them; remember that—'

'I do remember that, Madam!—'So often reminded, how can I forget 'it?'

'Yet I *will* owe to you this pro-'tection, if it be necessary, in the ear-'nest hope, that you will *shun*, rather 'than *seek* mischief, if any further en-'quiry after me be made. But what 'hinders you from leaving me?—Can-'not I send to you? The widow Fretch-'ville, it is plain, knows not her own 'mind: the people here indeed are more 'civil to me every day than other: but 'I had rather have lodgings more agree-'able to my circumstances. I best know 'what will suit them; and am resolved 'not to be obliged to any-body. If 'you leave me, I will privately retire 'to some one of the neighbouring vil-'lages, and there wait my cousin Mor-'den's arrival with patience.'

'I presume, Madam,' replied he, 'from what you have said, that your 'application to Harlowe Place has 'proved unsuccessful: I therefore hope, 'that you will now give me leave to 'mention the terms in the nature of 'settlements, which I have long in-'tended to propose to you; and which 'having till now delayed to do, through 'accidents not proceeding from my-'self; I had thoughts of urging to you '*the moment you entered upon your new* '*house*; and upon your finding your-'self as independent in *appearance* as 'you are in *fact*. Permit me, Ma-'dam, to propose these matters to you '—Not with an expectation of your '*immediate answer*; but for your *con-'sideration*.'

Were not hesitation, a self-felt glow, a downcast eye, encouragement more than enough? And yet you will observe (as I now do on recollection) that he was in no great hurry to solicit for a *day*; since he had no thoughts of proposing settlements, till I had got into my new house; and now, in his great complaisance to me, he desired leave to propose his terms, not with an expectation of my *immediate answer*; but for my *consideration* only—Yet, my dear, your advice was too much in my head at this time. I hesitated.

He urged on upon my silence: he would call God to witness to the justice, nay to the *generosity* of his intentions to me, if I would be so good as to hear what he had to propose to me, as to settlements.

Could not the man have fallen into the subject without this *parade*? Many a point, you know, *is* refused, and *ought to be* refused, if leave be asked to introduce it; and when *once* refused, the refusal must in honour be adhered to—Whereas, had it been *slid* in upon one, as I may say, it might have merited further consideration. If such a man as Mr. Lovelace knows not this, who should?

But he seemed to think it enough that he had asked my *leave* to propose his sentiments. He took no advantage of my silence, as I presume men *as modest* as Mr. Lovelace would have done, in a like case: yet gazing in my face very confidently, and seeming to expect my answer, I thought myself obliged to give the subject a more diffuse turn, in order to save myself the mortification of appearing too ready in my compliance, after such a distance as had been between us; and yet (in pursuance of your advice) I was willing to avoid the necessity of giving him such a repulse, as might again throw us out of the course—A cruel alternative to be reduced to!

'You talk of *generosity*, Mr. Love-'lace,' said I; 'and you talk of *justice*; 'perhaps, without having considered 'the force of the words, in the sense 'you use them on this occasion—Let 'me tell you what *generosity* is, in my 'sense of the word—TRUE GENE-'ROSITY is not confined to pecuniary 'instances: it is *more* than politeness: 'it is *more* than good faith: it is *more* 'than honour: it is *more* than *justice*: 'since all these are but duties, and 'what a worthy mind cannot dispense 'with. But TRUE GENEROSITY is 'greatness of soul. It incites us to do 'more by a fellow-creature, than can 'be strictly required of us. It obliges 'us to hasten to the relief of an object 'that wants relief; anticipating even 'such a one's hope or expectation. Ge-'nerosity, Sir, will not surely permit

'a worthy

'a worthy mind to doubt of it's honourable and beneficent intentions: much less will it allow itself to shock, to offend any one; and, least of all, a person thrown by adversity, mishap, or accident, into it's protection.'

What an opportunity had he to clear his intentions had he been so disposed, from the *latter part* of this home observation!—But he ran away with the *first*, and kept to that.

'Admirably defined!' he said—'But who at this rate, Madam, can be said to be *generous* to *you?*—Your *generosity* I implore; while *justice*, as it must be my sole merit, shall be my aim. Never was there a woman of such nice and delicate sentiments!'

'It is a reflection upon yourself, Sir, and upon the company you have kept, if you think these notions either nice or delicate. Thousands of my sex are more nice than I; for they would have avoided the devious path I have been surprized into: the consequences of which surprize have laid me under the sad necessity of telling a man, *who has not delicacy enough to enter into those parts of the female character which are it's glory and distinction*, what true generosity is.'

His divine monitress, he called me. He would endeavour to form his manners (as he had often promised) by my example. But he hoped I would now permit him to mention briefly the *justice* he proposed to do me, in the terms of the settlements; a subject so proper, *before now*, to have been entered upon; and which would have been entered upon long ago, had not my *frequent displeasure* [*I am ever in fault, my dear!*] taken from him the *opportunity* he had often wished for: but now having ventured to lay hold of *this*, nothing should divert him from improving it.

'I have no spirits, just now, Sir, to attend to such weighty points. What you have a mind to propose, write to me: and I shall know what answer to return. Only one thing let me remind you of, that if you touch upon any subject, in which my father has a concern, I shall judge by your treatment of the father, what value you have for the daughter.'

He looked as if he would chuse rather to speak than write: but had he *said* so, I had a severe return to have made upon him; as possibly he might see by *my* looks.

* *

In this way are we now: a sort of calm, as I said, succeeding a storm. What may happen next, whether a storm or a calm, with such a spirit as I have to deal with, who can tell?

But be that as it will, I think, my dear, I am not *meanly* off: and that this is a great point with me; and which I know you will be glad to hear: if it were only, that I can see this man without losing any of that dignity [What other word can I use, speaking of *myself*, that betokens *decency*, and not *arrogance?*] which is so necessary to enable me to look *up*, or rather with the *mind's* eye, I may say, to look *down* upon a man of this man's cast.

Although circumstances have so offered, that I could not take your advice as to the *manner* of dealing with him; yet you gave me so much courage by it, as has enabled me to conduct things to this issue; as well as determined me against leaving him: which *before*, I was thinking to do, at all adventures. Whether, when it came to the point, I *should* have done so, or not, I cannot say, because it would have depended upon his behaviour at the time.

But let his behaviour be what it will, I am afraid, (with you) that should any-thing offer at last to oblige me to leave him, I shall not mend my situation in the world's eye; but the contrary. And yet I will not be treated by him with indignity while I have any power to help myself.

You, my dear, have accused me of having *modestly'd away*, as you phrase it, several opportunities of being—Being what, my dear?—Why, the wife of a libertine: and what a libertine and his wife are, my cousin Morden's letter tells us.—Let me here, once for all, endeavour to account for the motives of my behaviour to this man, and for the principles I have proceeded upon, as they appear to me upon a close self-examination.

Be pleased then to allow me to think, that my motives on this occasion, arise not *altogether* from maidenly niceness; nor yet from the apprehension of what my present tormentor, and future husband, may think of a precipitate compliance, on such a disagreeable behaviour

viour as his: but they arise principally from what offers to my own heart; respecting, as I may say, it's own rectitude, it's own judgment of the *fit* and the *unfit*; as I would, without study, answer *for* myself *to* myself, in the *first* place; to *him*, and to the *world*, in the *second* only. Principles that *are* in my mind; that I *found* there; implanted, no doubt, by the first Gracious Planter; which therefore *impel* me, as I may say, to act up to them, that thereby I may, to the best of my judgment, be enabled to comport myself worthily in both states, (the single and the married) let others act as they will by *me*.

I hope, my dear, I do not deceive myself, and, instead of setting about rectifying what is amiss in my heart, endeavour to find excuses for habits and peculiarities, which I am unwilling to cast off or overcome. The heart is very deceitful: do you, my dear friend, lay mine open, [*But surely it is always open before you!*] and spare me not, if you think it culpable.

This observation, once for all, as I said, I thought proper to make, to convince you, that to the best of my judgment, my errors, in matters as well of lesser moment, as of greater, shall rather be the fault of my judgment than of my will.

I am, my dearest friend, *your ever obliged*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LETTER XX.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

TUESDAY NIGHT, MAY 16.

MR. Lovelace has sent me by Dorcas, his proposals, as follow—

'To spare a delicacy so extreme, and 'to obey you, I write: and the rather, 'that you may communicate this paper 'to Miss Howe, who may consult any 'of her friends you shall think proper 'to have intrusted on this occasion. I 'say, *intrusted*; because, as you know, 'I have given it out to several persons, 'that we are actually married.

'In the first place, Madam, I offer 'to settle upon you, by way of jointure, your whole estate: and moreover to vest in trustees such a part of 'mine in Lancashire, as shall produce 'a clear four hundred pounds a year, 'to be paid to your sole and separate 'use quarterly.

'My own estate is a clear, not nominal, 2000*l. per annum*. Lord M. 'proposes to give me possession either 'of that which he has in Lancashire, '[to which, by the way, I think I 'have a better title than he has himself] or that we call *The Lawn* in 'Hertfordshire, upon my nuptials with 'a lady whom he so greatly admires; 'and to make that I shall chuse a clear '1000*l. per annum*.

'My too great contempt of censure 'has subjected me to much slander. 'It may not therefore be improper to 'assure you, on the word of a gentleman, that no part of my estate was 'ever mortgaged: and that although I 'lived very expensively abroad, and 'made large draughts, yet that Midsummer Day next will discharge all 'that I owe in the world. My notions are not all bad ones. I have 'been thought, in pecuniary cases, *generous*. It would have deserved *another* name, had I not first been *just*.

'If, as your own estate is at present in 'your father's hands, you rather chuse 'that I should make a jointure out of 'mine, tantamount to yours, be it what 'it will, it shall be done. I will engage Lord M. to write *you*, what he 'proposes to do on the happy occasion: 'not as your desire or expectation, but 'to demonstrate, that no advantage is 'intended to be taken of the situation 'you are in with your own family.

'To shew the beloved daughter the 'consideration I have for her, I will 'consent, that she shall prescribe the 'terms of agreement in relation to the 'large sums, which must be in her father's hands, arising from her grandfather's estate. I have no doubt, but 'he will be put upon making large demands upon you. All those it shall 'be in your power to comply with, for 'the sake of your own peace. And 'the remainder shall be paid into your 'hands, and be entirely at your disposal, as a fund to support those charitable donations, which I have heard 'you so famed for *out*-of your family, 'and for which you have been so greatly 'reflected upon *in* it.

'As to cloaths, jewels, and the like, 'against the time you shall chuse to make 'your appearance, it will be my pride, 'that

'that you shall not be beholden for such 'of these as shall be answerable to the 'rank of both, to those who have had 'the stupid folly to renounce a daugh-'ter they deserved not. You must ex-'cuse me, Madam: you would mistrust 'my sincerity in the rest, could I speak 'of these people without asperity; 'though so nearly related to you.

'These, Madam, are my proposals. 'They are such as I always designed to 'make, whenever you would permit 'me to enter into the delightful sub-'ject. But you have been so deter-'mined to try every method for recon-'ciling yourself to your relations, even 'by giving me absolutely up for ever, 'that you have seemed to think it but 'justice to keep me at a distance, till 'the event of that your *predominant* 'hope could be seen. It is *now* seen! 'And although I *have been*, and per-'haps still *am*, ready to regret the want 'of that preference I wished for from 'you as Miss Clarissa Harlowe; yet I 'am sure, as the husband of Mrs. 'Lovelace, I shall be more ready to 'adore than to blame you for the pangs 'you have given to a heart, the genero-'sity, or rather *justice* of which, my 'implacable enemies have taught you 'to doubt: and this still the readier, 'as I am persuaded, that those pangs 'never would have been given by a 'mind so noble, had not the doubt 'been entertained, (perhaps with too 'great an appearance of reason;) and 'as I hope I shall have it to reflect, that 'the moment the doubt shall be over-'come, the indifference will cease.

'I will only add, that if I have omit-'ted any-thing, that would have given 'you farther satisfaction; or if the 'above terms be short of what you 'would wish; you will be pleased to 'supply them as you think fit. And 'when I know your pleasure, I will 'instantly order articles to be drawn 'up conformably; that nothing in my 'power may be wanting to make you 'happy.

'You will now, dearest Madam, 'judge, how far all the rest depends 'upon yourself.'

You see, my dear, what he offers. You see it is all my fault, that he has not made these offers before. I am a strange creature!—To be to blame in *every-thing*, and to *every-body*; yet neither intend the ill at the time, nor know it to *be* the ill till too late, or so nearly too late, that I must give up all the delicacy he talks of, to compound for my fault!

I shall now judge how far the rest depends upon myself! So coldly concludes he such warm, and, in the main, unobjectible proposals: would you not, as you read, have supposed, that the paper would conclude with the most earnest demand of a day?—I own, I had that expectation so strong, resulting *naturally*, as I may say, from the premises, that without *studying* for dissatisfaction, I could not help being dissatisfied when I came to the conclusion.

But you say there is no help. I must perhaps make *further* sacrifices. All delicacy it seems is to be at an end with me! —But if so, this man knows not what every *wife* man knows, that prudence, and virtue, and delicacy of mind in a *wife*, do the husband more *real* honour in the eye of the world, than the same qualities (were *she* destitute of them) in *himself*, do him: as the *want* of them in her does him more *dis-honour*; for are not the wife's errors the husband's reproach? How *justly* his reproach, is another thing.

I will consider this paper; and write to it, if I am able: for it seems now, *all the rest depends upon myself.*

LETTER XXI.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, MAY 17.

MR. Lovelace would fain have engaged me last night. But as I was not prepared to enter upon the subject of his proposals, (intending to consider them maturely) and was not highly pleased with his conclusion, I desired to be excused seeing him till morning; and the rather, as there is hardly any getting from him in tolerable time over-night.

Accordingly, about seven o'clock we met in the dining-room.

I find, he was full of expectation that I should meet him with a very favourable, who knows but with a *thankful* aspect? And I immediately found by

his ſullen countenance, that he was under no ſmall diſappointment that I did not.

'My deareſt love, are you well? 'Why look you ſo ſolemn upon me? 'Will your indifference never be over? 'If I have propoſed terms in any re'ſpect *ſhort* of your expectation—'

I told him that he had very conſiderately mentioned my ſhewing his propoſals to Miſs Howe; and as I ſhould have a ſpeedy opportunity to ſend them to her by Collins, I deſired to ſuſpend any talk upon that ſubject till I had her opinion upon them.

Good God!—If there were but the leaſt loop-hole! the leaſt room for delay!—But he was writing a letter to Lord M. to give him an account of his ſituation with me, and could not finiſh it ſo ſatisfactorily, either to my lord or to himſelf, as if I would condeſcend to ſay, whether the terms he had propoſed were acceptable or not.

Thus far, I told him, I could ſay, That my principal point was peace and reconciliation with my relations. As to other matters, the genteelneſs of his own ſpirit would put him upon doing more for me than I ſhould aſk, or expect. Wherefore, if all he had to write about was to know what Lord M. would do on my account, he might ſpare himſelf the trouble: for that my utmoſt wiſhes, as to myſelf, were much more eaſily gratified than he perhaps imagined.

He aſked me then, If I would ſo far permit him to touch upon the happy day, as to requeſt the preſence of Lord M. on the occaſion, and to be my father?

Father had a ſweet and venerable ſound with it, I ſaid. I ſhould be glad to have a father who would own me!

Was not this plain ſpeaking, think you, my dear? Yet it rather, I muſt own, appears ſo to me on reflection, than was *deſigned* freely at the time. For I then, with a ſigh from the bottom of my heart, thought of my *own father*; bitterly regretting that I am an outcaſt from him and from my mother.

Mr. Lovelace I thought ſeemed a little affected; at the *manner* of my ſpeaking, and perhaps at the ſad reflection.

'I am but a very young creature, 'Mr. Lovelace,' ſaid I, [and wiped my eyes as I turned away my face] 'although you have *kindly*, and *in love* 'to *me*, introduced ſo much ſorrow to 'me already: ſo you muſt not wonder, 'that the word *father* ſtrikes ſo ſenſibly upon the heart of a child ever 'dutiful till ſhe knew you, and whoſe 'tender years ſtill require the paternal 'wing.'

He turned towards the window: [Rejoice with me, my dear, ſince I ſeem to be devoted to him, that the man is not abſolutely impenetrable!] his emotion was viſible; yet he endeavoured to ſuppreſs it. Approaching me again; again he was obliged to turn from me; angelick ſomething, he ſaid: but then, obtaining a heart more *ſuitable* to his wiſh, he once more approached me.—For his own part, he ſaid, as Lord M. was ſo ſubject to the gout, he was afraid, that the compliment he had juſt propoſed to make him, might, if made, occaſion a *longer ſuſpenſion* than he could bear to think of: and if it did, it would vex him to the heart that he had made it.

I could not ſay a ſingle word to this, you know, my dear. But you will gueſs at my thoughts of what he ſaid—So much paſſionate love, *lip-deep!* So prudent, and ſo dutifully patient *at heart* to a relation he had till now ſo undutifully deſpiſed!—'Why, why, 'am I thrown upon ſuch a man!' thought I.

He heſitated, as if contending with himſelf; and after taking a turn or two about the room, He was at a great loſs what to determine upon, he ſaid, becauſe he had not the honour of knowing when he was to be made the happieſt of men—Would to God it might that very inſtant be reſolved upon!

He ſtopped a moment or two, ſtaring in his uſual confident way, in my downcaſt face. [Did I not, O my beloved friend, think you, want a father or a mother juſt then?] But if he could not, ſo *ſoon* as he wiſhed, procure my conſent to a day; in *that* caſe, he thought the compliment might *as well be* made to Lord M. as *not*—[*See my dear!*] Since the ſettlements might be drawn and engroſſed in the intervenient time, which would pacify his impatience, *as no time would be loſt*.

You will ſuppoſe how *I* was affected by this ſpeech, by repeating the ſubſtance of what *he* ſaid upon it; as follows.

—But, by his ſoul, he knew not, ſo

so much was I upon the reserve, and so much latent meaning did my eye import, whether, when he most hoped to please me, he was not farthest from doing so. Would I vouchsafe to say, Whether I approved of his compliment to Lord M. or not?

To leave it to *me*, to chuse whether the speedy day he ought to have urged for with earnestness, should be accelerated or suspended!—'Miss Howe,' thought I, at that moment, says, 'I must 'not run away from this man!'

'To be sure, Mr. Lovelace, if this 'matter be *ever to be*, it must be agree-'able to me to have the full approbation 'of *one* side, since I cannot have that 'of the *other*.'

'*If this matter be ever to be!* Good 'God! what words are these at this 'time of day! And full *approbation* of '*one* side! Why that word *approba-'tion?* When the greatest pride of all 'my family is, that of having the ho-'nour of so dear a creature for their 'relation? Would to Heaven, my dear-'est life,' added he, 'that, without 'complimenting *any*-body, to-morrow 'might be the happiest day of my life! '—What say you, my angel?' With a trembling impatience, that *seemed* not affected—'What say you for *to-'morrow?*'

It was not likely, my dear, I could say much to it, or name another day, had I been disposed to the latter, with such an *hinted delay from him*.

I was silent.

'*Next day*, Madam, if not to-mor-'row?'

Had he given me *time* to answer, it could not have been in the affirmative, you must think—But *in the same breath*, he went on—'Or the *day after that?*' —And taking both my hands in his, he stared me into a half-confusion—Would *you* have had patience with him, my dear?

'No, no,' said I, as calmy as pos-'sible, 'you cannot think, that I should 'imagine there can be reason for such 'a hurry. It will be most agreeable, 'to be sure, for my lord to be present.'

'I am all obedience and resignation,' returned the wretch, with a self-pluming air, as if he had acquiesced to a proposal *made by me*, and had complimented me with a great piece of *self-denial*.

Is it not plain, my dear, that he designs to vex and teaze me? Proud, yet mean, and foolish man, if so!—But you say all punctilio is at an end with me. Why, why, will he take pains to make a heart wrap itself up in reserve, that wishes only, and that for his sake as well as my own, to observe due decorum?

Modesty, I think, required of me, that it should pass as he had put it: did it not?—I think it did. Would to Heaven—but what signifies wishing?

But when he would have *rewarded himself*, as he had heretofore called it, for this self-supposed concession, with a kiss, I repulsed him with a just and very sincere disdain.

He seemed both vexed and surprized, as one who had made the most agreeable proposals and concessions, and thought them ungratefully returned. He plainly said, that he thought our situation would entitle him to such an innocent freedom: and he was both amazed and grieved to be thus scornfully repulsed.

No reply could be made by me on such a subject. I abruptly broke from him. I recollect, as I passed by one of the pier-glasses, that I saw in it his clenched hand offered in wrath to his forehead: the words, *Indifference, by his soul, next to hatred*, I heard him speak: and something of *ice* he mentioned: I heard not what.

Whether he intends to write to my lord, or to Miss Montague, I cannot tell. But *as all delicacy ought to be over with me now*, perhaps I am to blame to expect it from a man who may not know *what it is*. If he does *not*, and yet thinks himself very polite, and intends not to be otherwise, I am rather to be pitied than censured.

And after all, since I *must* take him as I find him, I *must*: that is to say, as a man so vain and so accustomed to be admired, that, not being conscious of internal defect, he has taken no pains to polish more than his outside: and as his proposals are higher than my expectations; and as, in his own opinion, he has a great deal to bear from *me*, I *will* (no new offence preventing) sit down to answer them: and, if possible, in terms as unobjectible to him, as his are to me.

But after all, see you not, my dear, more and more, the mismatch that there is in our minds?

However, I am willing to compound for my fault, by giving up (if that may be all my punishment) the expectation of what is deemed happiness in this life, with such a husband as I fear he will make. In short, I will content myself to be a *suffering person* through the state to the end of my life. —A long one it cannot be!

This may qualify him (as it may prove) from stings of conscience from misbehaviour to a *first* wife, to be a more tolerable one to a *second*, though not perhaps a better deserving one; while my story, to all who shall know it, will afford these instructions: *That the eye is a traitor, and ought ever to be mistrusted: that form is deceitful.* In other words; *that a fine person is seldom paired by a fine mind:* and *that sound principles, and a good heart, are the only bases on which the hopes of a* happy future, *either with respect to this world, or the other, can be built.*

And so much at present for Mr. Lovelace's proposals; of which I desire your opinion*.

Four letters are written by Mr. Lovelace from the date of his last, giving the state of affairs between him and the lady, pretty much the same as in hers in the same period, allowing for the humour in his, and for his resentments expressed with vehemence on her resolution to leave him, if her friends could be brought to be reconciled to her.—A few extracts from them will be only given.

'WHAT,' *says he*, 'might have become of me, and of my projects, had not her father, and the rest of the implacables, stood my friends?'

After violent threatenings of revenge, he says—

'Tis plain she would have given me up for ever: nor should I have been able to prevent her abandoning of me, unless I had *torn up the tree by the roots to come at the fruit*; which I hope *still to bring down by a gentle shake or two*, if I can but have patience to stay the ripening season.'

Thus triumphing in his unpolite cruelty, he says—

'After her haughty treatment of me, I am resolved she *shall* speak out. There are a thousand beauties to be discovered in the face, in the accent, in the *bush-beating* hesitations of a woman who is earnest about a subject which she wants to introduce, yet knows not how. Silly fellows, calling themselves generous ones, would value themselves for sparing a lady's

* We cannot forbear observing in this place, that the lady has been particularly censured, even by some of her own sex, as *over-nice* in her part of the above conversations: but surely this must be owing to want of attention to the *circumstances* she was in, and to her *character*, as well as to the *character of the man she had to deal with*; for although she could not be supposed to know so much of his designs as the reader does by means of his letters to Belford; yet she was but too well convinced of his faulty morals, and of the necessity there was, from the whole of his behaviour to her, to keep such an encroacher, as she frequently calls him, at a distance. In Letter XXIX. of Vol. III. the reader will see, that upon some favourable appearances she blames herself for her readiness to suspect him. '*But his character, his principles*,' said she, '*are so faulty; he is so light, so vain, so various!—Then, my dear, I have no guardian now, no father, no mother! Nothing but God and my own vigilance to depend upon!*' In Page 318, of the third Volume, '*Must I not with such a man*,' says she, '*be wanting to myself, were I not jealous and vigilant?*'

By this time the reader will see, that she had still *greater* reason for her jealousy and vigilance. And Lovelace will tell the sex, as he does in Letter LIV. of this Volume, *That the woman who resents not initiatory freedoms, must be lost.* '*Love is an encroacher*,' says he: '*love never goes backward. Nothing but the highest act of love can satisfy an* indulged love.

But the reader perhaps is too apt to form a judgment of Clarissa's conduct in critical cases by *Lovelace's complaints of her coldness*; not considering his views upon her; and that she is proposed as an *example*; and therefore in her trials and distresses must not be allowed to dispense with those rules which perhaps some others of her sex, in her delicate situation, would not have thought themselves so strictly bound to observe; although, if she had *not* observed them, a *Lovelace* would have carried all his points.

'confusion,

'confusion: but they are silly fellows 'indeed; and rob themselves of pro-'digious pleasure by their forward-'ness; and at the same time deprive 'her of displaying a world of charms, 'which only can be manifested on 'these occasions.

'I'll tell thee before-hand, how it 'will be with my charmer in this case '—She will be about it, and about it, 'several times: but I will not under-'stand her. At last, after half a do-'zen hem—ings, she will be obliged 'to speak out—"*I think, Mr. Love-*"*lace—I think, Sir—I think you were* "*saying some days ago*—" Still I will 'be all silence—her eyes fixed upon 'my shoe-buckles, as I sit over-against 'her—Ladies, when put to it thus, 'always admire a man's shoe-buckles, 'or perhaps some particular beauties 'in the carpet. "*I think you said,* "*that Mrs. Fretchville*—" Then a 'crystal tear trickles down each crim-'son cheek, vexed to have her virgin 'pride so little assisted. But, "Come, "my meaning dear," cry I to myself, "remember what I have suffered *for* "thee, and what I have suffered *by* "thee! Thy tearful pausings shall not "be helped out by me. Speak out, "love!—O the sweet confusion! Can "I rob myself of so many conflicting "beauties by the precipitate charmer-"pitying folly, by which a *politer* "man, [Thou *knowest*, lovely, that I "am no *polite* man!] betrayed by his "own tenderness, and *unused* to female "tears, would have been overcome?" 'I will feign an irresolution of mind on 'the occasion, that she may not *quite* ab-'hor me—that her reflections on the 'scene in my absence may bring to her 'remembrance some beauties in my part 'of it: an irresolution that will be 'owing to awe, to reverence, to pro-'found veneration; and that will have 'more eloquence in it, than words '*can* have. Speak out then, love, 'and spare not.

'*Hard heartedness*, as it is called, is 'an *essential* of the *libertine's character*. Familiarized to the distresses he 'occasions, he is seldom betrayed by 'tenderness into a complaisant weak-'ness unworthy of himself.'

Mentioning the settlements, he says—

'I am in earnest as to the terms. If 'I marry her, [And I have no doubt 'that I shall, after my pride, my am-'bition, my *revenge*, if thou wilt, is 'gratified] I will do her noble justice. 'The more I do for such a prudent, 'such an excellent œconomist, the 'more shall I do for myself.—But, 'by my soul, Belford, her haughti-'ness shall be brought down to own 'both love and obligation to me. Nor 'will this sketch of settlements bring 'us forwarder than I would have it. 'Modesty of sex will stand my friend 'at any time. At the very altar, our 'hands joined, I will engage to make 'this proud beauty leave the parson 'and me, and all my friends who 'should be present, though twenty in 'number, to look like fools upon one 'another, while she took wing, and 'flew out of the church-door, or 'window; (if that were open, and 'the door shut) and this only by a 'single word.'

He mentions his rash expression, that she should be his, although his damnation were to be the purchase.

'At that instant,' *says he*, 'I was 'upon the point of making a violent 'attempt, but was checked in the very 'moment, and but just in time to save 'myself, by the awe I was struck with 'on again casting my eye upon her ter-'rified but lovely face, and seeing, as 'I thought, her spotless heart in every 'line of it.

'O virtue, virtue!' *proceeds he*, 'what is there in thee, that can thus 'against his will affect the heart of a 'Lovelace!—Whence these involun-'tary tremors, and fear of giving 'mortal offence?—What art thou, 'that acting in the breast of a feeble 'woman, canst strike so much awe in-'to a spirit so intrepid! Which never 'before, no, not in my first attempt, 'young as I then was, and frighted at 'my own boldness, (till I found my-'self *forgiven*) had such an effect up-'on me!'

He paints in lively colours, that part of the scene between him and the lady, where she says, The word *father* has a sweet and venerable sound with it.

'I was exceedingly affected,' *says he*,

he, 'upon the occasion. But was a-'shamed to be surprized into such a 'fit of unmanly weakness—So *ashamed*, 'that I was resolved to subdue it at the 'instant, and to guard against the like 'for the future. Yet, at that mo-'ment, I more than half regretted, 'that I could not permit her to enjoy a 'triumph which she so well deserved to 'glory in—Her youth, her beauty, 'her artless innocence, and her man-'ner, equally beyond comparison or 'description. But her *indifference*, 'Belford!—That she could resolve to 'sacrifice me to the malice of my ene-'mies; and carry on the design in so 'clandestine a manner—Yet love her, 'as I do, to frenzy!—Revere her, as 'I do, to adoration!—These were the 'recollections with which I fortified 'my recreant heart against her!—Yet, 'after all, if she persevere, she must 'conquer!—Coward, as she has made 'me, that never was a coward before!'

He concludes his fourth letter in a vehement rage, upon her repulsing him, when he offered to salute her; having supposed, as he owns, that she would have been all condescension on his proposals to her.

'This,' *says he*, 'I will for ever re-'member against her, in order to steel 'my heart, that I may *cut through a 'rock of ice* to hers; and repay her for 'the disdain, the scorn, which glowed 'in her countenance, and was apparent 'in her air, at her abrupt departure 'from me, after such obliging beha-'viour on my side, and after I had so 'earnestly pressed her for an early day. 'The women below say, she hates me; 'she despises me!—And 'tis true: she 'does; she must—And why cannot I 'take their advice? I will not long, 'my fair-one, be despised by *thee*, and 'laughed at by *them!*

'Let me acquaint thee, Jack,' *adds he, by way of postscript*, 'that this ef-'fort of hers to leave me, if she could 'have been received; her sending for 'a coach on Sunday; no doubt, re-'solving not to return, if she had gone 'out without me, (for did she not de-'clare that she had thoughts to retire 'to some of the villages about town, 'where she could be safe and private?) 'have, altogether, so much alarmed 'me, that I have been adding to the 'written instructions for my fellow 'and the people below how to act in 'case she should elope in my absence: 'particularly letting Will know what 'he shall report to strangers in case she 'shall throw herself upon any such with 'a resolution to abandon me. To 'these instructions I shall further add 'as circumstances offer.'

LETTER XXII.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

THURSDAY, MAY 18.

I Have neither time nor patience, my dear friend, to answer every mate-rial article in your last letters just now received. Mr. Lovelace's proposals are all I like of him. And yet, (as you do) I think, that he concludes them not with that warmth and earn-estness which we might naturally have expected from him. Never in my life did I hear or read of so patient a man, with such a blessing in his reach. But wretches of his cast, between you and me, my dear, have not, I fancy, the ardours that honest men have. Who knows, as your Bell once spitefully said, but he may have half a dozen creatures to quit his hands of before he engages for life?—Yet I believe you must not expect him to be honest on this side of his grand climacterick.

He, to suggest delay from a compli-ment to be made to Lord M. and to give time for settlements! *He*, a part of whose character it is, not to know what complaisance to his relations is—I have no patience with him! You did indeed want an interposing friend on the affecting occasion which you men-tion in yours of yesterday morning. But, upon my word, were I to have been that moment in your situation, and been so treated, I would have torn his eyes out, and left it to his own heart, when I had done, to furnish the reason for it.

Would to Heaven to-morrow, with-out complimenting any-body, might be his happy day!—Villain! After he had himself suggested the compliment!—And I think he accuses YOU of de-laying!—Fellow, that he is!—How my heart is wrung!

But, as matters now stand betwixt you,

you, I am very unſeaſonable in expreſſing my reſentments againſt him. —Yet I don't know whether I am or not, neither; ſince it is the moſt cruel of fates, for a woman to be forced to have a man whom her heart deſpiſes. You muſt, at *leaſt*, deſpiſe him; at times, however. His clenched fiſt offered to his forehead on your leaving him in juſt diſpleaſure—I wiſh it had been a pole-axe, and in the hand of his worſt enemy.

I will endeavour to think of ſome method, of ſome ſcheme, to get you from him, and to fix you ſafely ſomewhere till your couſin Morden arrives —A ſcheme to lie by you, and to be purſued as occaſion may be given. You are ſure, that you can go abroad when you pleaſe? and that our correſpondence is ſafe? I cannot, however, (for the reaſons heretofore mentioned reſpecting your own reputation) wiſh you to leave him while he gives you not cauſe to ſuſpect his honour. But your heart I know would be the eaſier, if you were ſure of ſome aſylum in caſe of neceſſity.

Yet once more, I ſay, I can have no notion that he can or dare to mean you diſhonour. But then the man is a fool, my dear—that's all.

However, ſince you are thrown upon a fool, marry the fool, at the firſt opportunity; and though I doubt that this man will be the moſt ungovernable of fools, as all witty and vain fools are, take him as a puniſhment, ſince you cannot as a reward: in ſhort, as one given to convince you that there is nothing but imperfection in this life.

And what is the reſult of all I have written, but this? Either marry, my dear, or get from them all, and from him too.

You intend the latter, you'll ſay, as ſoon as you have opportunity. That, as above hinted, I hope quickly to furniſh you with: and then comes on a trial between *you* and *yourſelf*.

Theſe are the very fellows, that we women do not *naturally* hate. We don't always know what is, and what is not, in our power to do. When ſome principal point we have long had in view becomes ſo critical, that we muſt of neceſſity chuſe or refuſe, then perhaps we look about us; are affrighted at the wild and uncertain proſpect before us; and after a few ſtruggles and heart-aches, reject the untried new; draw in our horns, and reſolve to *jail-on*, as we did before, in a track we are acquainted with.

I ſhall be impatient till I have your next. I am, my deareſt friend, *your ever-affectionate and faithful*

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XXIII.

MR. BELFORD, TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 17.

I Cannot conceal from you any thing that relates to yourſelf ſo much as the incloſed does. You will ſee what the noble writer apprehends from you, and wiſhes of you, with regard to Miſs Harlowe, and how much at heart all your relations have it that you do honourably by her. They compliment me with an influence over you, which I wiſh with all my ſoul you would let me have in this article.

Let me once more entreat thee, Lovelace, to reflect, before it be too late, (before the mortal offence be given) upon the graces and merits of this lady. Let thy frequent remorſes at laſt end in one effectual remorſe. Let not pride and wantonneſs of heart ruin thy fairer proſpects. By my faith, Lovelace, there is nothing but vanity, conceit, and nonſenſe, in our wild ſchemes. As we grow older, we ſhall be wiſer, and looking back upon our fooliſh notions of the preſent hour, (our youth diſſipated) ſhall certainly deſpiſe ourſelves when we think of the honourable engagements we might have made: thou, more eſpecially, if thou letteſt ſuch a matchleſs creature ſlide through thy fingers. A creature pure from her cradle. In all her actions and ſentiments uniformly noble. Strict in the performance of all her even *unrewarded* duties to the moſt *unreaſonable of fathers*, what a *wife* will ſhe make the man who ſhall have the honour to call her his!

What apprehenſions wouldſt thou have had reaſon for, had ſhe been prevailed upon by giddy or frail motives, for which one man, by importunity, might prevail, as well as another?

We all know what an inventive genius

nius thou art master of: we are all sensible, that thou hast *a head to contrive, and a heart to execute*. Have I not called thine *the plotting'st heart in the universe?* I called it so upon knowledge. What wouldst thou *more?* Why should it be the most *villainous*, as well as the most *able?*—Marry the lady; and *when* married let her know what a number of contrivances thou hadst in readiness to play off. Beg of her not to hate thee for the communication; and assure her that thou gavest them up from remorse, and in justice to her extraordinary merit; and let her have the opportunity of congratulating herself for subduing a heart so capable of what thou callest *glorious mischief*. This will give *her* room for triumph; and even *thee* no less: she, for *hers* over *thee*; thou, for *thine* over *thyself*.

Reflect likewise upon her sufferings for thee. Actually at the time thou art forming schemes to ruin her, (at least in *her* sense of the word) is she not labouring under a father's curse laid upon her by thy means, and for thy sake? And wouldst thou give operation and completion to that curse, which otherwise cannot have effect?

And what, Lovelace, all the time is thy pride?—Thou that vainly imagin'st, that the whole family of the Harlowes, and that of the Howes too, are but thy machines, unknown to themselves, to bring about thy purposes, and thy revenge, why art thou more, or better, than the instrument even of her implacable brother, and envious sister, to perpetuate the disgrace of the most excellent of sisters, to which they are moved by vilely low and sordid motives?—Canst thou bear, Lovelace, to be thought the machine of thy inveterate enemy James Harlowe?—Nay, art not thou the cully of that still viler Joseph Leman, who serves himself as much by thy money, as he does thee by the double part he acts by thy direction?—And further still, art not thou the devil's agent, who only can, and who certainly will, suitably reward thee, if thou proceedest, and if thou effectest thy wicked purpose?

Could any man but thee put together upon paper the following questions with so much unconcern as thou seemest to have written them?—Give them a re-perusal, O heart of adamant!

'Whither can she fly to avoid me?
'Her parents will not receive her: her
'uncles will not entertain her: her be-
'loved Norton is in their direction,
'and cannot: Miss Howe dare not.
'She has not one friend in town but
'ME: is entirely a stranger to the
'town *.'—What must that heart be that can triumph in a distress so deep, into which she has been plunged by thy elaborate arts and contrivances? And what a sweet, yet sad reflection was that, which had like to have had it's due effect upon thee, arising from thy naming Lord M. for her nuptial father? Her tender years inclining her to *wish* a father, and to *hope* a friend.—O my dear Lovelace, canst thou resolve to be, instead of the father thou hast robbed her of, a devil?

Thou knowest, that I have no interest, that I can have no view, in wishing thee to do justice to this admirable creature. For thy own sake, once more I conjure thee, for thy family's sake, and for the sake of our *common humanity*, let me beseech thee to be just to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

No matter whether these expostulations are in character from me, or not. I *have* been and *am* bad enough. If thou takest my advice, which is (as the inclosed will shew thee) the advice of all thy family, thou wilt perhaps have it to reproach me, (and but perhaps neither) that thou art not a worse man than myself. But if thou dost *not*, and if thou ruinest such a virtue, all the complicated wickedness of ten devils, let loose among the innocent with full power over them, will not do so much vile and base mischief as thou wilt be guilty of.

It is said, that the prince on his throne is not safe, if a mind so desperate can be found, as values not it's *own* life. So may it be said, that the most immaculate virtue is not safe, if a man can be met with, who has no regard to his own honour, and makes a jest of the most solemn vows and protestations.

Thou mayest by trick, chicane, and false colours, thou who art worse than a pickeroon in love, overcome a poor lady so entangled as thou hast entangled her; so unprotected as thou hast

* See Page 475.

made

made her: but conſider, how much more generous and juſt to her, and noble to thyſelf, it is, to overcome *thyſelf*.

Once more, it is no matter, whether my paſt or future actions countenance my preachment, as perhaps thou'lt call what I have written: but this I promiſe thee, that whenever I meet with a woman of but one half of Miſs Harlowe's perfections, who will favour me with her acceptance, I will take the advice I give, and marry. Nor will I offer to try her honour at the hazard of my own. In other words, I will not degrade an excellent creature in *her own eyes*, by trials, when I have no cauſe for ſuſpicion. And let me add, with reſpect to thy *eagleſhip's* manifeſtation, of which thou boaſteſt, in thy attempts upon the innocent and uncorrupted, rather than upon thoſe whom thou humorouſly compareſt to wrens, wagtails, and phyl-tits, as thou calleſt them*, that I hope I have it not once to reproach myſelf, that I ruined the morals of any one creature, who otherwiſe would have been uncorrupted. Guilt enough in contributing to the *continued* guilt of other poor wretches, if I am one of thoſe who take care ſhe ſhall never *riſe again*, when ſhe has *once fallen*.

Whatever the capital devil, under whoſe banner thou haſt lifted, will let thee do, with regard to this incomparable woman, I hope thou wilt act with honour in relation to the incloſed, between Lord M. and me; ſince his lordſhip, as thou wilt ſee, deſires, that thou mayeſt not know he wrote on the ſubject; for reaſons, I think, very far from being creditable to thyſelf: and that thou will take as meant, the honeſt zeal for thy ſervice, of *thy real friend*,

J. BELFORD.

LETTER XXIV.

LORD M. TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

[INCLOSED IN THE PRECEDING.]

M. HALL, MONDAY, MAY 15.

SIR,

IF any man in the world has power over my nephew, it is you. I therefore write this, to beg you to interfere in the affair depending between him and the moſt accompliſhed of women, as every-one ſays; and *what every-one ſays, muſt be true.*

I don't know that he has any bad deſigns upon her; but I know his temper too well, not to be apprehenſive upon ſuch long delays: and the ladies here have been for ſome time in fear for her. Lady Sarah in particular, who (as you muſt know) is a wiſe woman, ſays, that theſe delays, in the preſent caſe, muſt be from him, rather than from the lady.

He had always indeed a ſtrong antipathy to marriage, and may think of playing his dog's tricks by her, as he has by ſo many others. If there's any danger of this, 'tis beſt to prevent it in time: for *when a thing is done, advice comes too late.*

He has always had the folly and impertinence to make a jeſt of me for uſing proverbs: but as they are the wiſdom of whole nations and ages collected into a ſmall compaſs, I am not to be ſhamed out of ſentences that often contain more wiſdom in them, than the tedious harangues of moſt of our parſons and moraliſts. Let him laugh at them, if he pleaſes: you and I know better things, Mr. Belford—*Though you have kept company with a wolf, you have not learnt to howl of him.*

But nevertheleſs, you muſt not let him know that I have written to you on this ſubject. I am aſhamed to ſay it; but he has ever treated me as if I were a man of very common underſtanding; and would, perhaps, think never the better of the beſt advice in the world, for coming from me. *Thoſe*, Mr. Belford, *who moſt love, are leaſt ſet by.—But who would expect velvet to be made out of a ſow's ear?*

I am ſure he has no reaſon however to ſlight me as he does. He may and will be the better for me, if he outlives me; though he once told me to my face, That I might do as I would with my eſtate; for that he, for his part, *loved his liberty as much as he deſpiſed money.* And at another time, twitting me with my phraſes, *That the man was above controul, who wanted not either to borrow or flatter.* He thought, I ſuppoſe, that *I could not cover him with my wings, without pecking at him*

* See Page 462.

with my bill; though I never uſed to be pecking at him, without very great occaſion: and God knows, he might have my very heart, if he would but endeavour to oblige me, by ſtudying his own good; for that is all I deſire of him. Indeed, it was his poor mother that firſt ſpoiled him; and I have been but too indulgent to him ſince. A fine grateful diſpoſition, you'll ſay, to *return evil for good!* But that was always his way. It is a good ſaying, and which was verified by him with a witneſs—*Children when little, make their parents fools; when great, mad.* Had his parents lived to ſee what I have ſeen of him, they would have been mad indeed.

This match, however, as the lady has ſuch an extraordinary ſhare of wiſdom and goodneſs, might ſet all to rights; and if you can forward it, I would enable him to make whatever ſettlements he could wiſh; and ſhould not be unwilling to put him in poſſeſſion of another pretty eſtate beſides. I am no covetous man, he knows. And indeed, what is a covetous man to be likened to ſo fitly, as *to a dog in a wheel which roaſts meat for others?* And what do I live for, (as I have often ſaid) but to ſee him and my two nieces well married and ſettled? May Heaven *ſettle him down to a better mind*, and turn his heart to more of goodneſs and conſideration!

If the delays are on his ſide, I tremble for the lady; and, if on hers, (as he tells my niece Charlotte) I could wiſh ſhe were apprized that *delays are dangerous*. Excellent as ſhe is, ſhe ought not to depend on her merits with ſuch a changeable fellow, and ſuch a profeſt marriage-hater, as he has been. *Deſert and reward*, I can aſſure her, *ſeldom keep company together*.

But let him remember, that *vengeance, though it comes with leaden feet, ſtrikes with iron hands*. If he behaves ill in this caſe, he may find it ſo. What a pity it is, that a man of his talents and learning ſhould be ſo vile a rake! Alas! alas! *Une poignee de bonne vie vaut mieux que plein muy de clergé*; a handful of good life is better than a whole buſhel of learning.

You may throw in, too, as a friend, that ſhould he provoke me, it may not be too late for me to marry. My old friend Wycherly did ſo, when he was older than I am, on purpoſe to plague *his* nephew: and, in ſpite of this gout, I might have a child or two ſtill. I have not been without ſome thoughts that way, when he has angered me more than ordinary. But theſe thoughts have gone off again hitherto, upon my conſidering, that *the children of very young and very old men* (though I am not ſo very old neither) *laſt not long*; and that *old men, when they marry young women*, are ſaid to *make much of death*. Yet who knows but that matrimony might be good againſt the gouty humours I am troubled with?

No man is every-thing—You, Mr. Belford, are a learned man. I am a peer. And do you (as you beſt know how) inculcate upon him the force of theſe wiſe ſayings which follow, as well as thoſe which went before; but yet ſo diſcreetly, as that he may not know, that you *borrow your darts from my quiver*. Theſe be they—*Happy is the man who knows his follies in his youth. He that lives well, lives long.* Again, *He that lives ill one year, will ſorrow for it ſeven.* And again, as the Spaniards have it—*Who lives well, ſees afar off!* Far off indeed; for he ſees into eternity, as a man may ſay. Then that other fine ſaying, *He who periſhes in needleſs dangers, is the devil's martyr.* Another proverb I picked up at Madrid, when I accompanied Lord Lexington in his embaſſy to Spain, which might teach our nephew more mercy and compaſſion than is in his nature I doubt to ſhew; which is this, *That he who pities another, remembers himſelf.* And this that is going to follow, I am ſure he has proved the truth of a hundred times, *That he who does what he will, ſeldom does what he ought.* Nor is that unworthy of his notice, *Young mens frolicks, old men feel.* My deviliſh gout, God help me—But I will not ſay what I was going to ſay.

I remember, that you yourſelf, complimenting me for my taſte in pithy and wiſe ſentences, ſaid a thing that gave me a high opinion of you; and it was this: '*Men of talents*,' ſaid you, '*are ſooner to be convinced by ſhort ſentences than by long preachments, becauſe the ſhort ſentences drive themſelves into the heart, and ſtay there, while long diſcourſes, though ever ſo good, tire the attention; and one good thing*

'*thing drives out another, and so on, till all is forgotten.*'

May your good counsel, Mr. Belford, founded upon these hints which I have given, pierce his heart, and incite him to do what will be so happy for himself, and so necessary for the honour of that admirable lady whom I long to see his wife; and, if I may, I will not think of one for myself.

Should he abuse the confidence she has placed in him, I myself shall pray, that vengeance may fall upon his head —'*Raro*'—I quite forget all my Latin; but I think it is, '*Raro antecedentem scelestum deseruit pede pœna claudo:* 'Where vice goes before, vengeance (sooner or later) will follow.' But why do I translate these things for you?

I shall make no apologies for this trouble. I know how well you love him and me; and there is nothing in which you could serve us both more importantly, than in forwarding this match to the utmost of your power. When it is done, how shall I rejoice to see you at M. Hall! Mean time, I shall long to hear that you are likely to be successful with him; and am, *dear Sir, your most faithful friend and servant,*

M.

Mr. Lovelace having not returned an answer to Mr. Belford's expostulatory letter so soon as Mr. Belford expected, he wrote to him, expressing his apprehension, that he had disobliged him by his honest freedom. Among other things, he says—

'I PASS my time here at Watford, 'attending my dying uncle, very heavily. I cannot therefore, by any 'means, dispense with thy correspondence. And why shouldst thou punish me, for having more conscience 'and more remorse than thyself? Thou 'who never thoughtest either conscience 'or remorse an honour to thee. And 'I have, besides, a melancholy story to 'tell thee, in relation to Belton and 'his Thomasine; and which may afford a lesson to all the keeping class.

'I have a letter from each of our 'three companions in the time. They 'have all the wickedness that thou 'hast, but not the wit. Some new 'rogueries do two of them boast of, 'which, I think, if compleated, deserve the gallows.

'I am far from hating intrigue upon 'principle. But to have aukward fellows plot, and commit their plots to 'paper, destitute of the seasonings, of 'the *acumen*, which is thy talent, how 'extremely shocking must their letters be!—But do thou, Lovelace, whether thou art, or art not, determined 'upon thy measures with regard to the 'fine lady in thy power, enliven my 'heavy heart by thy communications; 'and thou wilt oblige *thy melancholy 'friend,*

'J. BELFORD.'

LETTER XXV.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

FRIDAY NIGHT, MAY 19.

WHEN I have opened my views to thee so amply as I have done in my former letters; and have told thee, that my principal design is but to bring virtue to a trial, that, *if* virtue, it need not be afraid of; and that the reward of it will be marriage; (that is to say, if, after I have carried my point, I cannot prevail upon her to live with me the life of honour*; for that thou knowest is the wish of my heart) I am amazed at the repetition of thy wambling nonsense.

I am of opinion with thee, that some time hence, when I am *grown wiser*, I shall conclude, that *there is nothing but vanity, conceit, and nonsense, in my present wild schemes.* But what is this saying, but that I must be *first* wiser?

I do *not* intend *to let this matchless creature slide through my fingers.*

Art thou able to say half the things in her praise, that I have said, and am continually saying or writing?

Her gloomy father cursed the sweet creature, because she put it out of his wicked power to compel her to have the man she hated. Thou knowest how little merit she has with me on this score.—And shall I not *try* the virtue I intend, upon full proof, to *reward*, because her father is a tyrant?

* See Vol. III. Page 336.

—Why art thou thus eternally reflecting upon so excellent a woman, as if thou wert assured she would *fail in the trial?*—Nay, thou declarest, every time thou writest on the subject, that she *will*, that she *must* yield, *entangled as she is:* and yet makest her virtue the pretence of thy solicitude for her.

An instrument of the vile James Harlowe, dost thou call me?—O Jack! how could I curse thee!—*I* an *instrument* of that brother! of that sister! But mark the end—And thou shalt see what will become of that brother, and of that sister!

Play not against me my own acknowledged sensibilities, I desire thee. Sensibilities, which at the same time that they contradict thy charge of an *adamantine heart* in thy friend, thou hadst known nothing of, had I not communicated them to thee.

If I ruin such a virtue, sayest thou! —Eternal monotonist!—Again; '*The most immaculate virtue may be ruined by men who have no regard to their honour, and who make a jest of the most solemn oaths*,' &c. What must be the virtue that will be ruined *without oaths?* Is not the world full of these deceptions? And are not *lovers oaths* a jest of hundreds of years standing? And are not cautions against the perfidy of our sex, a necessary part of the female education?

I do intend to endeavour to overcome *myself*; but I must first try, if I cannot overcome *this lady*. Have I not said, that the honour of her sex is concerned that I should *try?*

Whenever thou meetest with a woman of but half her perfections, thou wilt marry—Do, Jack.

Can a girl be *degraded by trials*, who is not *overcome?*

I am glad that thou takest crime to thyself, for not endeavouring to convert the poor wretches whom *others* have ruined. I will not recriminate upon thee, Belford, as I might, when thou flatterest thyself, that thou never ruinedst the morals of any young creature, who otherwise would not have been corrupted—The palliating consolation of an Hottentot heart, determined rather to gluttonize on the garbage of other foul feeders than to reform.—But tell me, Jack, wouldst thou have spared such a girl as my rosebud, had I not, by my example, engaged thy generosity? Nor was my rosebud the only girl I spared.—When my power was acknowledged, who more merciful than thy friend?

It is *resistance* that inflames desire,
Sharpens the darts of love, and blows it's fire.
Love is disarm'd that meets with too much ease;
He languishes, and does not care to please.

The women know this as well as the men. They love to be addressed with spirit;

And therefore 'tis their golden fruit they guard
With so much care, to make possession hard.

Whence, for a by-reflection, the ardent, the complaisant gallant is so often preferred to the cold, the unadoring husband. And yet the sex do not consider, that variety and novelty give the ardour and the obsequiousness; and that, were the rake as much used to them as the husband is; he would be [and is to *his own wife*, if married] *as* indifferent to their favours, as their husbands are; and the husband, in his turn, would, to another woman, be the rake. Let the women, upon the whole, take this lesson from a Lovelace—Always to endeavour to make themselves as new to a husband, and to appear as elegant and as obliging to him, as they are desirous to appear to a *lover*, and actually were to *him*, as *such*; and then the *rake*, which all women love, will last longer in the *husband*, than it generally does.

But to return:—If I have not sufficiently cleared my conduct to thee in the above; I refer thee once more to mine of the 13th of last month*. And pr'ythee, Jack, lay me not under a necessity to repeat the same things so often. I hope thou readest what I write *more than once*.

I am not displeased that thou art so apprehensive of my resentment, that I cannot miss a day, without making thee uneasy. Thy conscience, 'tis plain, tells thee, that thou hast deserved my displeasure: and if it has convinced thee of *that*, it will make

* Vol. III. Page 331. *& seq.*

thee

thee afraid of repeating thy fault. See that this be the conſequence. Elſe, now that thou haſt told me how I can puniſh thee, it is very likely that I do puniſh thee by my ſilence, although I have as much pleaſure in writing on this charming ſubject, as thou canſt have in reading what I write.

When a boy, if a dog ran away from me through fear, I generally looked about for a ſtone, or a ſtick; and if neither offered to my hand, I ſkimmed my hat after him, to make him afraid for ſomething. What ſignifies power, if we do not exert it?

Let my lord know, that thou *haſt* ſcribbled to me. But give him not the contents of thy epiſtle. Though a parcel of crude ſtuff, *he* would think there was ſomething in it. Poor arguments will do, when brought in favour of what we like. But the ſtupid peer little thinks that this lady is a rebel to love. On the contrary, not only he, but all the world, believe her to be a volunteer in his ſervice.—So I ſhall incur blame, and ſhe will be pitied, if any-thing happen amiſs.

Since my lord's heart is ſo ſet upon this match, I have written already to let him know, That my unhappy character has given my beloved an ungenerous diffidence of me. That ſhe is ſo mother-ſick and father-fond, that ſhe had rather return to Harlowe Place, than marry. That ſhe is even apprehenſive, that the ſtep ſhe has taken of going off with me, will make the ladies of a family of ſuch rank and honour as ours, think ſlightly of her. That, therefore, I deſire his lordſhip (though this hint, I tell him, muſt be very delicately touched) to write me ſuch a letter as I can ſhew her. (Let him treat me in it ever ſo freely, I ſhall not take it amiſs, I tell him, becauſe I know his lordſhip takes pleaſure in writing to me in a corrective ſtile.) That he may make what offers he pleaſes on the marriage. That I deſire his preſence at the ceremony; that I may take from his hand the greateſt bleſſing that mortal man can give me.

I have not abſolutely told the lady that I would write to his lordſhip to this effect; yet have given her reaſon to think I will. So that without the laſt neceſſity I ſhall not produce the anſwer I expect from him: for I am very loth, I own, to make uſe of any of my family's names for the furthering of my deſigns. And yet I muſt make all ſecure, before I pull off the maſk. *Was not this my motive for bringing her hither?*

Thus, thou ſeeſt, that the old peer's letter came very ſeaſonably. I thank thee for it. But as to his ſentences, they cannot poſſibly do me good. I was early ſuffocated with his *wiſdom of nations*. When a boy, I never aſked anything of him, but out flew a *proverb*; and if the tendency of that was to deny me, I never could obtain the leaſt favour. This gave me ſo great an averſion to the very word, that when a child, I made it a condition with my tutor, who was an honeſt parſon, that I would not read my Bible at all, if he would not excuſe me one of the wiſeſt books in it: to which, however, I had no other objection, than that it was called *The Proverbs*. And as for Solomon, he was then a hated character with me, not becauſe of his polygamy, but becauſe I had conceived him to be ſuch another muſty old fellow as my uncle.

Well, but let us leave old ſaws to old men.—What ſignifies thy tedious whining over thy departing relation? Is it not generally agreed, that he cannot recover? Will it not be kind in thee to put him out of his miſery? I hear, that he is peſtered ſtill with viſits from doctors and apothecaries, and ſurgeons; that they cannot cut ſo deep as the mortification has gone; and that in every viſit, in every ſcarification, inevitable death is pronounced upon him. Why then do they keep tormenting him? Is it not to take away more of his living fleece than of his dead fleſh?—When a man is given over, the fee ſhould ſurely be refuſed. Are they not now robbing his heirs?—What haſt thou to do, if the will be as thou'dſt have it?—He ſent for thee [Did he not?] to cloſe his eyes. He is but an *uncle*, is he?

Let me ſee, if I miſtake not, it is in the Bible, or ſome other good book: can it be in Herodotus?—O I believe it is in Joſephus; a half-facred, and half-profane author. He tells us of a king of Syria, put out of his pain by his prime-miniſter, or one who deſerved to be ſo for his contrivance. The ſtory ſays, if I am right, that he ſpread a wet cloth over his face, which killing him, he reigned in his place. A notable fellow! Perhaps this wet cloth in the original,

ginal, is what we now call *Laudanum*; a potion that overſpreads the faculties, as the wet cloth did the face of the royal patient; and the tranſlator knew not how to render it.

But how like a forlorn varlet thou ſubſcribeſt, '*Thy melancholy friend*, J. 'BELFORD!'—Melancholy! for what? To ſtand by, and ſee fair play between an old man and death? I thought thou hadſt been more of a man; thou that art not afraid of an *acute* death, a ſword's point, to be ſo plaguily hyp'd at the conſequences of a *chronical* one!—What though the ſcarificators work upon him day by day? It is only upon a *caput mortuum*: and pr'ythee *go to*, to uſe the *ſtylum veterum*, and learn of the *royal butchers*; who for ſport (an hundred times worſe men than thy Lovelace) widow ten thouſand at a bruſh, and make twice as many fatherleſs—Learn of *them*, I ſay, how to ſupport a *ſingle* death.

But art thou ſure, Jack, it is a mortification?—My uncle once gave promiſes of ſuch a root-and-branch diſtemper: but, alas! it turned to a ſmart gout-fit; and *I had* the mortification inſtead of *him*—I have heard that bark in proper doſes will arreſt a mortification in it's progreſs, and at laſt cure it. Let thy uncle's ſurgeon know, that it is worth more than his ears, if he preſcribe one grain of the bark.

I wiſh *my* uncle had given me the opportunity of ſetting thee a better example: thou ſhouldſt have ſeen what a brave fellow I had been. And had I had occaſion to write, my concluſion would have been this: 'I hope the old 'Trojan's happy. In that hope, I am 'ſo; and *thy rejoicing friend*,

'R. LOVELACE.'

Dwell not always, Jack, upon one ſubject. Let me have poor Belton's ſtory. The ſooner the better. If I can be of ſervice to him, tell him he may command me either in purſe or perſon. Yet the former with a freer will than the latter; for how can I leave my goddeſs? But I'll iſſue my commands to my other vaſſals to attend thy ſummons.

If ye want *head*, let *me* know. If not, my quota, on this occaſion, is *money*.

LETTER XXVI.

MR. BELFORD, TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

SATURDAY, MAY 20.

NOT one word will I reply to ſuch an abandoned wretch, as thou haſt ſhewn thyſelf to be in thine of laſt night. I will leave the lady to the protection of that Power who only can work miracles; and to her own merits. Still I have hopes that theſe will ſave her.

I will proceed, as thou deſireſt, to poor Belton's caſe; and the rather, as it has thrown me into ſuch a train of thinking upon our paſt lives, our preſent courſes, and our future views, as may be of ſervice to both, if I can give due weight to the reflections that ariſe from it.

The poor man made me a viſit on *Thurſday*, in this my melancholy attendance. He began with complaints of his ill health and ſpirits, his hectick cough, and his encreaſed malady of ſpitting of blood; and then led to his ſtory.

A confounded one it is; and which highly aggravates his other maladies: for it has come out, that his Thomaſine (who, truly, would be new-chriſtened, you know, that her name might be nearer in ſound to the chriſtian name of the man whom ſhe pretended to doat upon) has for many years carried on an intrigue with a fellow who had been hoſtler to her father, (an innkeeper at Darking;) of whom, at the expence of poor Belton, ſhe has made a gentleman; and managed it ſo, that having the art to make herſelf his caſhier, ſhe has been unable to account for large ſums, which he thought forthcoming at demand, and had truſted to her cuſtody, in order to pay off a mortgage upon his paternal eſtate in Kent, which his heart had run upon leaving clear, but which cannot now be done, and will ſoon be foreclоſed. And yet ſhe has ſo long paſſed for his wife, that he knows not what to reſolve upon about her; nor about the two boys he was ſo fond of, ſuppoſing them to be his; whereas now he begins to doubt his ſhare in them.

So KEEPING don't do, Lovelace. 'Tis *not* the eligible life.—'A man may 'keep a woman,' ſaid the poor fellow to

to me, 'but *not his eſtate!*—Two inte-'reſts!—Then, my tottering fabrick!' pointing to his emaciated carcaſe.

We do well to value ourſelves upon our *liberty*, or, to ſpeak more properly, upon the liberties we take! We had need to run down matrimony as we do, and to make that ſtate the ſubject of our frothy jeſts; when we frequently render ourſelves (for this of Tom's is not a ſingular caſe) the dupes and tools of women who generally govern us (by arts our wiſe heads penetrate not) more abſolutely than a wife would attempt to do.

Let us conſider this point a little; and that upon our own *principles*, as *libertines*, ſetting aſide what is exacted from us by the *laws of our country*, and it's *cuſtoms*; which, nevertheleſs, we cannot get over, till we have got over almoſt all moral obligations, as members of ſociety.

In the firſt place, let us conſider (we, who are in poſſeſſion of eſtates by *legal deſcent*) how we ſhould have liked to have been ſuch naked deſtitute varlets, as we muſt have been, had *our* fathers been as wiſe as ourſelves; and deſpiſed matrimony as we do—And then let us aſk ourſelves, If we ought not to have the ſame regard for *our* poſterity, as we are glad our fathers had for *theirs?*

But this, perhaps, is too *moral* a conſideration.—To proceed, therefore, to thoſe conſiderations which will be more ſtriking to *us:* How can we reaſonably expect œconomy or frugality (or anything indeed but riot and waſte) from creatures who have an *intereſt*, and muſt therefore have *views*, different from our own?

They know the uncertain tenure (our fickle humours) by which they hold: and is it to be wondered at, ſuppoſing them to be provident harlots, that they ſhould endeavour, if they have the *power*, *to lay up againſt a rainy day?* Or, if they have *not* the power, that they ſhould ſquander all they can come at, when they are ſure of *nothing but the preſent hour*; and when the life they live, and the ſacrifices they have made, put conſcience and honour out of the queſtion?

Whereas a *wife*, having the ſame family-intereſt with her huſband, lies not under either the ſame *apprehenſions* or *temptations*; and has not broken through (of *neceſſity*, at leaſt, has not) *thoſe* reſtraints which education has faſtened upon her: and if ſhe make a private purſe, which we are told by anti-matrimonialiſts, all wives love to do, and has children, it goes all into the ſame family at the long-run.

Then, as to the great article of fidelity to your bed, are not women of family, who are well-educated, under greater reſtraints, than creatures, who, if they ever *had* reputation, ſacrifice it to ſordid intereſt, or to more ſordid appetite, the moment they give up to you? Does not the example you furniſh, of having ſucceeded with her, give encouragement for *others* to attempt her likewiſe? For, with all her blandiſhments, can any man be ſo credulous, or ſo vain, as to believe, that the woman *he* could perſuade, *another* may not prevail upon?

Adultery is ſo capital a guilt, that even rakes and libertines, if not wholly abandoned, and, as I may ſay, *invited* by a woman's levity, diſavow and condemn it: but here, in a ſtate of KEEPING, a woman is in no danger of incurring (*legally*, at leaſt) that guilt; and you yourſelf have broken through and overthrown in her all the fences and boundaries of moral honeſty, and the modeſty and reſerves of her ſex: and what tie ſhall hold her againſt inclination, or intereſt? And what ſhall deter an attempter?

While a huſband has this ſecurity from *legal* ſanctions, that if his wife be detected in a criminal converſation with a man of fortune, (the *moſt* likely by bribes to ſeduce her) he may recover very great damages, and procure a divorce beſides: which, to ſay nothing of the ignominy, is a conſideration that muſt have ſome force upon *both* parties. And a wife muſt be vicious indeed, and a reflection upon a man's own choice, who, for the ſake of change, and where there are no qualities to ſeduce, nor affluence to corrupt, will run ſo many hazards to injure her huſband in the tendereſt of all points.

But there are difficulties in procuring a divorce, [And ſo there ought]—'And 'none,' ſays the rake, 'in parting with a 'miſtreſs whenever you ſuſpect her; or 'whenever you are weary of her, and have 'a mind to change her for another.'

But muſt not the man be a brute indeed, who can caſt off a woman whom he has ſeduced, [if he take her from the town,

town, that's another thing] without some flagrant reason; something that will better justify him to *himself*, as well as to *her*, and to the *world*, than mere *power* and *novelty?*

But I don't see, if we judge by *fact*, and by the *practice* of all we have been acquainted with of the *keeping-class*, that we know how to part with them when we have them.

That we know we *can* if we *will*, is all we have for it: and this leads us to bear many things from a *mistress*, which we would not from a *wife*. But, if we are good-natured and humane: if the woman has *art*, [And what woman *wants* it, who has fallen by *art?* and to whose precarious situation *art* is so necessary?] if you have given her the credit of being called by your name: if you have a settled place of abode, and have received and paid visits in her company, as your wife: if she has brought you children—You will allow, that these are strong obligations upon you, in the world's eye, as well as to your own heart, against tearing yourself from such close connexions. She will stick to you as your skin: and it will be next to flaying yourself to cast her off.

Even if there be *cause* for it, by infidelity, she will have managed ill, if she have not her defenders. Nor did I ever know a cause or a person so *bad*, as to want advocates, either from ill-will to the one, or pity to the other: and you will then be thought a hard-hearted miscreant: and even were she to go off without credit to *herself*, she will leave *you* as little; especially with all those whose good opinion a man would wish to cultivate.

Well, then, shall this poor privilege, that we may part with a woman if we *will*, be deemed a balance for the other inconveniencies? Shall it be thought by *us*, who are men of family and fortune, an equivalent for giving up *equality of degree*; and taking for the partner of our bed, and very probably more than the partner in our estates, (to the breach of all family-rule and order) a low-born, a low-educated creature, who has not brought any-thing into the common stock; and can possibly make no returns for the solid benefits she receives, but those libidinous ones, which a man cannot boast of, but to *his* disgrace, nor think of, but to the shame of *both?*

Moreover, as the man advances in years, the fury of his libertinism will go off. He will have different aims and pursuits, which will diminish his appetite to ranging, and make such a regular life as the matrimonial and family-life, palatable to him, and every day more palatable.

If he has children, and has reason to think them *his*, and if his lewd courses have left him *any* estate, he will have cause to regret the *restraint* his boasted *liberty* has laid him under, and the valuable *privilege* it has deprived him of; when he finds, that it must descend to some relation, for whom, whether near or distant, he cares not one farthing; and who perhaps (if a man of virtue) has held him in the utmost contempt for his dissolute life.

And were we to suppose his estate in his power to bequeath as he pleases; why should a man resolve, for the gratifying of his foolish humour only, to bastardize his race? Why should he wish to expose his children to the scorn and insults of the rest of the world? Why should he, whether they are sons or daughters, lay them under the necessity of complying with proposals of marriage, either *inferior as to fortune*, or *unequal as to age?* Why should he deprive the children he loves, who themselves may be guilty of no fault, of the respect they would wish to have, and to deserve; and of the opportunity of associating themselves with *proper*, that is to say, with *reputable* company? And why should he make them think themselves under obligation to every person of character, who will vouchsafe to visit them? What little reason, in a word, would such children have to bless their father's obstinate defiance of the laws and customs of his country; and for giving them a mother, of whom they could not think with honour; to whose *crime* it was, that they owed their very beings, and whose example it was their duty to shun?

If the education and morals of these children are left to chance, as too generally they are, (for the man who has humanity and a feeling heart, and who is capable of fondness for his offspring, I take it for granted, will marry;) the case is still worse; his crime is perpetuated, as I may say, by his children: and the sea, the army, perhaps the highway, for the boys; the common for the girls; too often point out the way to a worse catastrophe.

What,

What, therefore, upon the whole, do we get by treading in these crooked paths, but danger, disgrace, and a too late repentance?

And after all, do we not frequently become the cullies of our own libertinism; sliding into the very state with those half-worn-out doxies, which perhaps we might have entered into with their ladies; at least with their superiors both in degree and fortune? And all the time, lived handsomely like ourselves; not sneaking into holes and corners; and, when we crept abroad with our women, looking about us, and at every one that passed us, as if we were confessedly accountable to the censures of all honest people.

My cousin Tony Jenyns, thou knewest. He had not the actively mischievous spirit, that thou, Belton, Mowbray, Tourville, and *myself*, have: but he imbibed the same notions we do, and carried them into practice.

How did he prate against wedlock! How did he strut about as a *wit* and a *smart!* and what a *wit* and a *smart* did all the boys and girls of our family (myself among the rest, then an urchin) think him, for the airs he gave himself?—Marry! No, not for the world; what man of sense would bear the insolences, the petulances, the expensiveness of a wife! He could not for the heart of him think it tolerable, that a woman of *equal* rank and fortune, and, as it might happen, *superior* talents to his own, should look upon herself to have a right to share the benefit of that fortune which she brought him.

So, after he had fluttered about the town for two or three years, in all which time he had a better opinion of himself than any-body else had, what does he do, but enter upon an affair with his fencing-master's daughter?

He succeeds; takes private lodgings for her at Hackney; visits her by stealth; both of them tender of reputations that were *extremely* tender, but which neither had quite given up; for rakes of either sex are always the last to condemn or cry down themselves: visited by nobody, nor visiting: the life of a thief, or of a man beset by creditors, afraid to look out of his own house, or to be seen abroad with her. And thus went he on for twelve years, and, though he had a good estate, hardly making both ends meet; for, though no glare, there was no economy; and beside, he had every year a child, and very fond of his children was he. But none of them lived above three years: and being now, on the death of the dozenth, grown as dully sober, as if he had been a real husband, his good Mrs. Thomas (for he had not permitted her to take his own name) prevailed upon him to think the loss of their children a judgment upon the parents for their wicked way of life; [A time will come, Lovelace, if we live to advanced years, in which reflection will take hold of the enfeebled mind;] and then it was not difficult for his woman to induce him, by way of compounding with Heaven, to marry her. When this was done, he had leisure to sit down, and contemplate; and to recollect the many offers of persons of family and fortune which he had declined in the prime of life: his expences *equal* at least: his reputation not only *less*, but *lost*: his enjoyments *stolen*: his partnership *unequal*, and such as he had always been ashamed of. But the woman said, That after twelve or thirteen years cohabitation, Tony did an honest thing by her. And that was all my poor cousin got by making his old mistress his new wife—Not a drum, not a trumpet, not a fife, not a tabret, nor the expectation of a new joy, to animate him on!

What Belton will do with his Thomasine I know not; nor care I to advise him: for I see the poor fellow does not like that any-body should curse her but himself. This he does very heartily. And so low is he reduced, that he blubbers over the reflection upon his past fondness for her cubs, and upon his present doubts of their being his: 'What 'a damned thing is it, Belford, if Tom 'and Hal should be the hostler dog's 'puppies, and not mine!'

Very true! and I think the strong health of the chubby-faced muscular whelps confirms the too great probability. But I say not so to him.

You, he says, are such a gay, lively mortal, that this sad tale would make no impression upon you: especially now, that your whole heart is engaged as it is. *Mowbray* would be too violent upon it: he has not, he says, a feeling heart. *Tourville* has no discretion: and, a pretty jest! although he and his Thomasine lived without reputation in the world, (people guessing that they were not married, notwithstanding the went

by his name) yet he would not *too much* discredit the *curſed ingrate* neither!

Could a man act a weaker part, had he been really married; and were he ſure he was going to ſeparate from the mother of his own children?

I leave this as a leſſon upon thy heart, without making any application: only with this remark, That after we libertines have indulged our licentious appetites, reflecting (in the conceit of our vain hearts) both with our lips and by our lives, upon our anceſtors, and the good old ways, we find out, when we come to years of diſcretion, if we live till then, (what all who knew us found out before, that is to ſay, we find out) our own deſpicable folly; that thoſe good old ways would have been beſt for *us*, as well as for the reſt of the world; and that in every ſtep we have deviated from them, we have only expoſed our vanity, and our ignorance at the ſame time.

J. BELFORD.

LETTER XXVII.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

SATURDAY, MAY 20.

I Am pleaſed with the ſober reflection with which thou concludeſt thy laſt; and I thank thee for it. Poor Belton!—I did not think his Thomaſine would have proved ſo very a devil. But this muſt everlaſtingly be the riſque of a keeper, who takes up with a low-bred girl. This I never did. Nor had I occaſion to do it. Such a one as *I*, Jack, needed only, till now, to ſhake the ſtateſieſt tree, and the mellowed fruit dropt into my mouth—Always of Montaigne's taſte, thou knoweſt—Thought it a glory to ſubdue a girl of family.—More truly delightful to me the ſeduction-progreſs than the crowned act: for that's a vapour, a bubble! And moſt cordially do I thank thee for thy indirect hint, that I am right in my preſent purſuit.

From ſuch a woman as Miſs Harlowe, a man is ſecured from all the inconveniences thou expatiateſt upon.

Once more, therefore, do I thank thee, Belford, for thy approbation!—A man need not, as thou ſayeſt, ſneak into *holes* and *corners*, and ſhun the day, in the company of ſuch *a woman as this*. How friendly in thee, thus to abet the favourite purpoſe of my heart!—Nor can it be a diſgrace to me, to permit *ſuch a lady* to be called by my name!—Nor ſhall I be at all concerned about the *world's cenſure*, if I live to the *years of diſcretion*, which thou mentioneſt, ſhould I be taken in, and prevailed upon to tread with her the good old path of my anceſtors.

A bleſſing on thy heart, thou honeſt fellow! I *thought* thou wert in jeſt, and but acquitting thyſelf of an engagement to Lord M. when thou wert pleading for matrimony in behalf of this lady!—It could not be principle, I knew, in thee: it could not be compaſſion—A little *envy*, indeed, I ſuſpected!—But now I ſee thee once more thyſelf: and once more, ſay I, a bleſſing on thy heart, thou true friend, and very honeſt fellow!

Now will I proceed with courage in all my ſchemes, and oblige thee with the continued narrative of my progreſſions towards bringing them to effect!—But I could not forbear to interrupt my ſtory, to ſhew my gratitude.

LETTER XXVIII.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

AND now will I favour thee with a brief account of our preſent ſituation.

From the higheſt to the loweſt we are all extremely happy.—*Dorcas* ſtands well in her lady's graces. *Polly* has aſked her advice in relation to a court-ſhip-affair of her own. No oracle ever gave better. *Sally* has had a quarrel with her woollen-draper; and made my charmer lady-chancellor in it. She blamed Sally for behaving tyrannically to a man who loves her. Dear creature! to ſtand againſt a glaſs, and to ſhut her eyes becauſe ſhe will not ſee her face in it!—Mrs. *Sinclair* has paid *her* court to ſo unerring a judge, by requeſting her advice with regard to both nieces.

This the way we have been in for ſeveral days with the people below. Yet *ſola* generally at her meals, and ſeldom at other times in their company. They now, uſed to her ways, [*Perſeverance muſt conquer*] never preſs her; ſo when they

they meet, all is civility on both sides. Even married people, I believe, Jack, prevent abundance of quarrels, by seeing one another *but seldom*.

'But how stands it between thyself 'and the lady,' methinks thou askest, 'since her abrupt departure from thee, 'and undutiful repulse of Wednesday 'morning?'

Why, pretty well in the main. Nay, *very* well. For why? The dear saucy-face knows not how to help herself. Can fly to no other protection. And has, besides, over-heard a conversation [Who would have thought she had been so near?] which passed between Mrs. Sinclair, Miss Martin, and myself, that very Wednesday afternoon; which has set her heart at ease with respect to several doubtful points.

Such as, particularly, Mrs. Fretchville's unhappy state of mind—Most humanely pitied by Miss Martin, who knows her very well—The husband she has lost, and herself, (as Sally says) lovers from their cradles. Pity from one begets pity from another, be the occasion for it either strong or weak; and so many circumstances were given to poor Mrs. Fretchville's distress, that it was impossible but my beloved must *extremely* pity *her* whom the less tender-hearted Miss Martin *greatly* pitied.

My Lord M.'s gout his only hindrance from visiting my spouse. Lady Betty and Miss Montague soon expected in town.

My earnest desire signified to have my spouse receive those ladies in her own house, if Mrs. Fretchville would but know her own mind; and I pathetically lamented the delay occasioned by her not knowing it.

My intention to stay at Mrs. Sinclair's, *as I said I had told them before*, while my spouse resides in her own house, (when Mrs. Fretchville could be brought to quit it) in order to gratify her utmost punctilio.

My passion for my beloved (which, as I told them in a high and fervent accent, was the truest that man could have for woman) I boasted of. It was, in short, I said, of the *true Platonick kind*; or I had no notion of what Platonick love was.

So it is, Jack; and must end as Platonick love generally does end.

Sally and Mrs. Sinclair next praised, *but not grossly*, my beloved. Sally particularly admired her purity; called it exemplary; yet (to avoid suspicion) expressed her thoughts that she was *rather over-nice*, if she might presume to say so *before me*. But nevertheless she applauded me for the strict observation I made of my vow.

I more freely blamed her reserves to me; called her cruel; inveighed against her relations; doubted her love. Every favour I asked of her denied me. Yet my behaviour to her as pure and delicate when alone, as when before them—Hinted at something that had passed between us that very day, that shewed her indifference to me in so strong a light, that I could not bear it. But that I would ask her for her company to the play of *Venice Preserved*, given out for Saturday night as a benefit-play, the prime actors to be in it; and this, to see if I were to be denied every favour.—Yet, for my own part, I *loved not tragedies*; though she did, for the sake of the instruction, the warning, and the example generally given in them.

I had too much *feeling*, I said. There was enough in the world to make our hearts sad, without carrying grief into our diversions, and making the distresses of others our own.

True enough, Belford; and I believe, generally speaking, that all the men of our cast are of my mind—They love not any tragedies but those in which they themselves act the parts of tyrants and executioners; and afraid to trust themselves with serious and solemn reflections, run to comedies, in order to laugh away compunction on the distresses they have occasioned, and to find examples of men as immoral as themselves. For very few of our comick performances, as thou knowest, give us good ones.—I answer, however, for myself—Yet thou, I think, on recollection, lovest to deal in the *lamentable*.

Sally answered for Polly, who was absent; Mrs. Sinclair for herself, and for all her acquaintance, even for Miss Partington, in preferring the comick to the tragick scenes.—And I believe they are right; for the devil's in it, if a confided-in rake does not give a girl enough of tragedy in his comedy.

I asked Sally to oblige my fair-one with her company. She was engaged. [That was right, thou'lt suppose.] I asked Mrs. Sinclair's leave for Polly.

To be sure, she answered, Polly would think it an honour to attend Mrs. Lovelace: but the poor thing was tender-hearted; and as the tragedy was deep, would weep herself blind.

Sally, mean time, objected Singleton, that I might answer the objection, and save my beloved the trouble of making it, or debating the point with me; and on this occasion I regretted that her brother's projects were not laid aside; since, if they had been given up, I would have gone in person to bring up the ladies of my family to attend my spouse.

I then, from a letter just before received from one in her father's family, warned them of a person who had undertaken to find us out, and whom I thus in writing [having called for pen and ink] described, that they might arm all the family against him—A sun-burnt, pock-fretten sailor, ill-looking, big-boned; his stature about six foot; an heavy eye, an over-hanging brow; a deck-treading stride in his walk; a couteau generally by his side; lips parched from his gums, as if by staring at the sun in hot climates; a brown coat; a coloured handkerchief about his neck; an oaken plant in his hand near as long as himself, and proportionably thick.

No questions asked by this fellow must be answered. They should call *me* to him. But not let my beloved know a tittle of this, so long as it could be helped. And I added, that if her brother or Singleton came, and if they behaved civilly, I would, for *her sake*, be civil to *them*: and in this case, she had nothing to do, but to own her marriage, and there could be no pretence for violence on either side. But most fervently I swore, that if she were *conveyed away*, either by *persuasion* or *force*, I would directly, *on missing her but one day*, go to demand her at Harlowe Place, whether she were there or not; and if I recovered not a sister, I would have a brother; and should find out a captain of a ship as well as he.

And now, Jack, dost thou think she'll attempt to get from me, do what I will?

Mrs. Sinclair began to be afraid of mischief in her house—I was apprehensive that she would over-do the matter, and be out of character. I therefore winked at her. She primmed; nodded, to shew she took me; twanged out a high-ho through her nose, lapped one horse-lip over the other, and was silent.

Here's preparation, Belford!—Dost think I will throw it all away for anything thou canst say, or Lord M. write? —*No indeed!*—as my charmer says, when she bridles.

* *

And what must necessarily be the consequence of all this with regard to my beloved's behaviour to me? Canst thou doubt, that it was all complaisance next time she admitted me into her presence?

Thursday we were very happy. All the morning *extremely* happy. I kissed her charming hand.—I need not describe to thee her hand and arm. When thou saweſt her, I took notice that thy eyes dwelt upon them whenever thou couldſt ſpare them from that beauty-ſpot of wonders, her face—*Fifty* times kiſſed her hand, I believe—Once her cheek, intending her lip, but ſo rapturouſly, that ſhe could not help ſeeming angry.

Had ſhe not thus kept me at arms-length; had ſhe not denied me thoſe innocent liberties which our ſex, from ſtep to ſtep, aſpire to; could I but have gained acceſs to her in her hours of heedleſſneſs and diſhabille; [For full-dreſs creates dignity, augments conſciouſneſs, and compels diſtance] we had familiarized to each other long ago. But keep her up ever ſo late; meet her ever ſo early; by breakfaſt-time ſhe is dreſſed for the day; and at her *earlieſt hour*, as nice as others dreſſed. All her forms thus kept up, wonder not that I have made ſo little progreſs in the propoſed trial.—But how muſt all this diſtance ſtimulate!

Thurſday morning, as I ſaid, we were extremely happy—About *noon*, ſhe numbered the hours ſhe had been with me; all of them to me but as one minute; and deſired to be left to herſelf. I was loth to comply: but obſerving the ſun-ſhine begin to ſhut in, I yielded.

I dined out. Returning, I talked of the houſe, and of Mrs. Fretchville —Had ſeen Mennell—Had preſſed him to get the widow to quit. She pitied Mrs. Fretchville. [Another good effect of the over-heard converſation]—Had written to Lord M. expected an anſwer ſoon from him. I was admitted to ſup

ſup with her. I urged for her approbation or correction of my written terms. She again promiſed an anſwer as ſoon as ſhe had heard from Miſs Howe.

Then I preſſed for her company to the play on Saturday night. She made objections, as I had foreſeen: her brother's projects, warmth of the weather, &c. But in ſuch a manner as if half-afraid to diſoblige me. [Another happy effect of the over-heard converſation.] I ſoon got over theſe therefore; and ſhe conſented to favour me.

Friday paſſed as the day before.

Here were two happy days to both. Why cannot I make every day equally happy? It looks *as if it were in my power to do ſo.* Strange, I ſhould thus delight in teazing a woman I ſo dearly love! I muſt, I doubt, have ſomething in my temper like Miſs Howe, who loves to plague the man who puts himſelf in her power.—But I could not do thus by ſuch an angel as this, did I not believe, that after her probation-time ſhall be expired, and if ſhe be not to be brought to *cohabitation*, (my darling view) I ſhall reward her as ſhe wiſhes.

Saturday is half-over. We are equally happy—Preparing for the play. Polly has offered her company, and is accepted. I have directed her where to weep: and this not only to ſhew her humanity, [A weeping eye indicates a gentle heart] but to have a pretence to hide her face with a fan or handkerchief.—Yet Polly is far from being every man's girl; and we ſhall ſit in the gallery green-box.

The woes of others, ſo well repreſented as thoſe of Belvidera particularly will be, muſt, I hope, unlock and open my charmer's heart. Whenever I have been able to prevail upon a girl to permit me to attend her to a play, I have thought myſelf ſure of her. The female heart (all gentleneſs and harmony by nature) expands, and forgets it's forms, when it's attention is carried out of itſelf at an agreeable or affecting entertainment—Muſick, and perhaps a collation afterwards, co-operating.

Indeed, I have no hope of ſuch an effect here; but I have more than one end to anſwer by getting her to a play. To name but one—Dorcas has a *maſterkey*, as I have told thee.—But it were worth while to carry her to the play of *Venice Preſerved*, were it but to ſhew her, that there have been, and may be, much deeper diſtreſſes than ſhe can poſſibly know.

Thus exceedingly happy are we at preſent. I hope we ſhall not find any of Nat. Lee's left-handed gods at work, to daſh our bowl of joy with wormwood.

R. LOVELACE.

LETTER XXIX.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

FRIDAY, MAY 19.

I Would not, if I could help it, be ſo continually brooding over the dark and gloomy face of my condition [All nature, you know, my dear, and everything in it, has a bright and gloomy ſide] as to be thought unable to enjoy a more hopeful proſpect. And this, not only for my own ſake, but for yours, who take ſuch generous concern in all that befals me.

Let me tell you then, my dear, that I have known four-and-twenty hours together not unhappy ones, my ſituation conſidered.

She then gives the particulars of the converſation which ſhe had over-heard between Mr. Lovelace, Mrs. Sinclair, and Miſs Martin; but accounts more minutely than he had done, for the opportunity ſhe had of over-hearing it, unknown to them.

She gives the reaſons ſhe has to be pleaſed with what ſhe heard from each: but is ſhocked at the meaſure he is reſolved to take, if he miſſes her but for one day. Yet is pleaſed, that he propoſes to avoid aggreſſive *violence, if her brother and he meet in town.*

Even Dorcas, *ſays ſhe*, appears leſs exceptionable to me than before; and I cannot but pity her for her neglected education, as it is matter of ſo much regret to *herſelf*: elſe, there would not be much in it; as the low and illiterate are the moſt uſeful people in the commonwealth, (ſince ſuch conſtitute the labouring part of the publick) and as a lettered education but too generally ſets people above thoſe ſervile offices, by

by which the buſineſs of the world is carried on. Nor have I any doubt that there are, take the world through, twenty happy people among the unlettered, to one among thoſe who have had a ſchool-education.

This, however, concludes not againſt learning or letters; ſince one would wiſh to lift to ſome little diſtinction, and more genteel uſefulneſs, thoſe who have capacity, and whoſe parentage one reſpects, or whoſe ſervices one would wiſh to reward.

Were my mind quite at eaſe, I could enlarge, perhaps not unuſefully, upon this ſubject; for I have conſidered it with as much attention as my years, and little experience and obſervation, will permit.

But the extreme illiterateneſs and indocility of this maid are ſurprizing, conſidering that ſhe wants not inquiſitiveneſs, appears willing to learn, and, in other reſpects, has quick parts. This confirms to me what I have heard remarked, That there is a *docible ſeaſon*, a learning-time, as I may ſay, for every perſon, in which the mind may be led ſtep by ſtep, from the lower to the higher (year by year) to improvement. How induſtriouſly ought theſe ſeaſons, as they offer, to be taken hold of, by tutors, parents, and other friends, to whom the cultivation of the genius of children and youth is committed; ſince, one elapſed, and no foundation laid, they hardly ever return!—And yet it muſt be confeſſed, that there are ſome geniuſes, which, like ſome fruits, ripen not till late. And induſtry and perſeverance will do prodigious things—But for a learner to have thoſe firſt rudiments to maſter, at twenty years of age ſuppoſe, which others are taught, and they themſelves might have attained, at ten, what an up-hill labour!

Theſe kind of obſervations you have always wiſhed me to interſperſe, as they ariſe to my thoughts. But it is a ſign that my proſpects are a little mended, or I ſhould not, among ſo many more intereſting ones, that my mind has been of late filled with, have had heart's eaſe enough to make them.

Let me give you my *reflections* on my more hopeful proſpects.

I am now, in the firſt place, better able to account for the delays about the houſe, than I was before—Poor Mrs. Fretchville!—Though I know her not, I pity her!—Next, it looks well, that he had apprized the women (before this converſation with them) of his intention to ſtay in this houſe, after I was removed to the other. By the tone of his voice he ſeemed concerned for the appearance this new delay would have with me.

So handſomely did Miſs Martin expreſs herſelf of me, that I am ſorry, methinks, that I judged ſo hardly of her, when I firſt came hither—Free people may go a great way, but not all the way: and as ſuch are generally unguarded, precipitate, and thoughtleſs, the ſame quickneſs, changeableneſs, and *ſuddenneſs* of ſpirit, as I may call it, may intervene (if the heart be not corrupted) to recover them to thought and duty.

His reaſon for declining to go in perſon to bring up the ladies of his family, while my brother and Singleton continue their machinations, carries no bad face with it; and one may the rather allow for *their* expectations, that ſo proud a ſpirit as his ſhould attend them for this purpoſe, as he ſpeaks of them ſometimes as perſons of punctilio.

Other reaſons I will mention for my being eaſier in my mind than I was before I over-heard this converſation.

Such as, the advice he has received in relation to Singleton's mate; which agrees but too well with what you, my dear, wrote to me in yours of May the 10th *.

His not intending to acquaint *me* with it.

His cautions to the ſervants about the ſailor, if he ſhould come, and make enquiries about us.

His reſolution to avoid violence, were he to fall in either with my brother, or this Singleton; and the eaſy method he has chalked out, in this caſe, to prevent miſchief; ſince I need only *not to deny* my being his. But yet I ſhould be exceedingly unhappy in my own opinion, to be driven into ſuch a tacit acknowledgment to any new perſons, till I am ſo, although I have been led (ſo much againſt my liking) to give countenance to the belief of the perſons below that we are married.

I think myſelf obliged, from what paſſed between Mr. Lovelace and me

* See Page 477.

on

on Wednesday, and from what I overheard him say, to consent to go with him to the play; and the rather, as he had the discretion to propose one of the nieces to accompany me.

I cannot but acknowledge that I am pleased to find that he has actually written to Lord M.

I have promised to give Mr. Lovelace an answer to his proposals as soon as I have heard from you, my dear, on the subject.

I hope that in my next letter I shall have reason to confirm these favourable appearances. Favourable I must think them in the wreck I have suffered.

I hope, that in the trial which you hint may happen between *me* and *myself*, (as you * express it) if he should so behave, as to oblige me to leave him, I shall be able to act in such a manner, as to bring no discredit upon myself in your eye; and that is all now that I have to wish for. But if I value him so much as you are pleased to suppose I do, the trial which you imagine will be so difficult to me, will not, I conceive, be upon getting from him, when the means to effect my escape are lent me; but how I shall behave when got from him; and if, like the Israelites of old, I shall be so weak as to wish to return to my Egyptian bondage.

I think it will not be amiss, notwithstanding the present favourable appearances, that you should perfect the scheme (whatever it be) which you tell me you have thought of †, in order to procure for me an asylum, in case of necessity. Mr. Lovelace is certainly a deep and dangerous man; and it is therefore but prudence to be watchful, and to be provided against the worst. Lord bless me, my dear, how am I reduced!—Could I ever have thought to be in such a situation, as to be obliged to stay with a man, of whose honour by me I could have but the *shadow* of a doubt!—But I will look forward, and hope the best.

I am certain, that your letters are safe.—Be perfectly easy, therefore, on that head.

Mr. Lovelace will never be out of my company by his good will, otherwise I have no doubt that I am mistress of my goings-out and comings-in; and did I think it needful, and were I not afraid of my brother and Captain Singleton, I would oftener put it to trial.

LETTER XXX.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

SATURDAY, MAY 20.

I Did not know, my dear, that you deferred giving an answer to Mr. Lovelace's proposals, till you had my opinion of them. A particular hand occasionally going to town, will leave this at Wilson's, that no delay may be made on that account.

I never had any doubt of the man's justice and generosity in matters of settlement; and all his relations are as noble in their spirits, as in their descent: but *now* it may not be amiss for you to wait, to see what returns my lord makes to his letter of invitation.

The scheme I think of is this.

There is a person whom I believe you have seen with me; her name Townsend, who is a great dealer in Indian silks, Brussels and French laces, cambricks, linen, and other valuable goods; which she has a way of coming at, duty free; and has a great vend for them (and for other curiosities which she imports) in the private families of the gentry round us.

She has her days of being in town, and then is at a chamber she rents at an inn in Southwark, where she keeps patterns of all her silks, and much of her portable goods, for the conveniency of her London customers. But her place of residence, and where she has her principal warehouse, is at Deptford, for the opportunity of getting her goods on shore.

She was first brought to me by my mother, to whom she was recommended on the supposal of my speedy marriage, that I might have an opportunity to be as fine as a princess, was my mother's expression, at a moderate expence.

Now, my dear, I must own, that I do not love to encourage these contraband traders. What is it, but bidding defiance to the laws of our country, when we do; and hurting fair traders;

* See Page 501.

† Ibid.

and

and at the same time robbing our prince of his legal due, to the diminution of those duties which possibly must be made good by new levies upon the publick?

But however Mrs. Townsend and I, though I have not yet had dealings with her, are upon a very good foot of understanding. She is a sensible woman; she has been abroad, and often goes abroad in the way of her business; and gives very entertaining accounts of all she has seen. And having applied to me, to recommend her to you, (as it is her view to be known to young ladies who are likely to change their condition) I am sure I can engage her to give you protection at her house at Deptford; which she says is a populous village; and one of the last, I should think, in which you would be sought for. She is not much there, you will believe, by the course of her dealings; but, no doubt, must have somebody on the spot, in whom she can confide: and there perhaps you might be safe, till your cousin comes. And I should not think it amiss, that you write to him out of hand. I cannot suggest to you *what* you should write, That must be left to your own discretion. For you will be afraid, no doubt, of the consequence of a variance between the two men.

But notwithstanding all this, and were I sure of getting you safely out of his hands, I will nevertheless forgive you, were you to make all up with him, and marry to-morrow. Yet I will proceed with my projected scheme in relation to Mrs. Townsend; though I hope there will be no occasion to prosecute it, since your prospects seem to be changed, and since you have had *twenty-four not unhappy hours together*. How my indignation rises for this poor consolation in the courtship [*Courtship* must I call it?] of such a woman! Let me tell you, my dear, that were you once your own absolute and independent mistress, I should be tempted, notwithstanding all I have written, to wish you the wife of any man in the world, rather than the wife either of Lovelace, or of Solmes.

Mrs. Townsend, as I have recollected, has two brothers, each a master of a vessel; and who knows, as she and they have concerns together, but that, in case of need, you may have a whole ship's crew at your devotion? If Lovelace give you cause to leave him, take no thought for the people at Harlowe Place. Let *them* take care of one another. It is a care they are *used* to. The law will help to secure *them*. The wretch is no assassin, no night-murderer. He is an *open*, because a *fearless* enemy; and should he attempt anything that would make him obnoxious to the laws of society, you might have a fair riddance of him either by flight or the gallows; no matter which.

Had you not been so minute in your account of the circumstances that attended the opportunity you had of overhearing the dialogue between Mr. Lovelace and two of the women, I should have thought the conference contrived on purpose for your ear.

I shewed Mr. Lovelace's proposals to Mr. Hickman, who had chambers once at Lincoln's Inn, being designed for the law, had his elder brother lived. He looked so wise, so proud, and so important, upon the occasion; and wanted to take so much consideration about them —Would take them home if I pleased —and weigh them well—and so-forth— and the like—and all that—that I had no patience with him, and snatched them back with anger.

O dear!—to be so angry, an't please me, for his zeal!—

Yes, zeal without knowledge, I said —like most other zeals—If there were no objections that struck him at once, there were none.

'So *hasty*, dearest Madam!'

'And so *slow*, un-dearest Sir,' I could have said—'But SURELY,' said I, with a look which implied, '*Would* '*you rebel, Sir!*'

He begged my pardon—*Saw* no objection, indeed!—But might he be allowed once more—

No matter—No matter—I would have shewn them to my mother, I said, who, though of no inn of court, knew more of these things than half the lounging lubbers of them; and that at first sight—only that she would have been angry at the confession of our continued correspondence.

But, my dear, let the articles be drawn up, and engrossed; and solemnize upon them; and there's no more to be said.

Let me add, that the sailor-fellow has been tampering with my Kitty, and offered

offered a bribe, to find where to direct to you. Next time he comes, I will have him laid hold of; and if I can get nothing out of him, will have him drawn through one of our deepest fish-ponds. His attempt to corrupt a servant of mine will justify my orders.

I send this letter away directly. But will follow it by another; which shall have for it's subject only my mother, myself, and your uncle Antony. And as your prospects are more promising than they have been, I will endeavour to make you smile upon the occasion. For you will be pleased to know, that my mother has had a formal tender from that grey goose, which may make her skill in settlements useful to herself, were she to encourage it.

May your prospects be still more and more happy, prays *your own*

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XXXI.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

SAT. SUNDAY, MAY 20, 21.

NOW, my dear, for the promised subject. *You must not ask me*, how I came by the *originals* [such they really are] that I am going to present you with: for my mother would not read to me those parts of your uncle's letter, which bore hard upon myself, and which leave him without any title to mercy from me: nor would she let me hear but what she pleased of hers in answer; for she has condescended to answer him—with a denial, however: but such a denial, as no one but an *old batchelor* would take from a widow.

Any-body, except myself, who could have been acquainted with such a fal-lal courtship as this must have been had it proceeded, would have been glad it had gone on: and I dare say, but for the saucy daughter, it had. My good mamma, in that case, would have been ten years the younger for it, perhaps: and could I but have approved of it, I should have been considered by her as if ten years older than I am: since, very likely, it would have been; 'We wi-'dows, my dear, know not how to 'keep men at a distance—So as to give 'them pain, in order to try their love. '—You must advise me, child: you 'must teach me to be cruel—Yet not '*too* cruel neither—So as to make a 'man heartless, who has no time, God 'wot, to throw away.' Then would my behaviour to Mr. Hickman have been better liked; and my mother would have bridled like her daughter.

O my dear, how might we have been diverted, by the practisings for the recovery of the *long-forgottens!* could I have been sure that it would have been in my power to have put them asunder, in the Irish style, *before they had come together*. But there's no trusting to a widow whose goods and chattels are in her own hands, addressed by an old batchelor, who has *fine things*, and offers to leave her *ten thousand pounds better* than he found her, and sole mistress, besides, of all her *notables!* for these, as you will see by-and-by, are his proposals.

The old Triton's address carries the writer's marks upon the very superscription—'*To the equally amiable, and* '*worthy admired*' [There's for you!] '*Mrs.* ANNABELLA HOWE, *widow*,' the last word added, I suppose, as *esquire* to a man, as a word of honour; or for fear the *bella* to *Anna*, should not enough distinguish the person meant from the spinster: [Vain hussy you'll call me, I know] and then follows—'*These humbly present.*'—Put down as a memorandum, I presume, to make a leg, and behave handsomely at presenting it; he intending very probably to deliver it himself.

And now stand by—To see

Enter OLD NEPTUNE.

His head adorned with sea-weed, and a crown of cockle-shells; as we see him decked out in Mrs. Robinson's ridiculous grotto.

'MONDAY, MAY 15.

'MADAM,

'I Did make a sort of resolution ten 'years ago, never to marry. I 'saw in other families, where they 'lived *best*, you will be pleased to mark 'that, *queernesses* I could not away 'with. Then, liked well enough to 'live single for the sake of my bro-'ther's family; and for one child in it 'more than the rest. But that girl 'has turned us all off the hinges: and 'why I should deny myself any com-

'forts for them as will not thank me 'for so doing, I don't know.

'So much for my motives as from 'self and family: but the dear Mrs. 'Howe makes me go further.

'I have a very great fortune, I bless 'God for it, all of my own getting, or 'most of it; you will be pleased to mark 'that; for I was the youngest brother of 'three. You have also, God be thank-'ed, a great estate, which you have 'improved by your own frugality and 'wise management. Frugality, let me 'stop to say, is one of the greatest vir-'tues in this mortal life, because it en-'ables us to do justice to *all*, and puts 'it in our power to benefit *some* by it, 'as we see they *deserve*.

'You have but one child; and I am 'a batchelor, and have never a one—'All batchelors cannot say so: where-'fore your daughter may be the better 'for me, if she will keep up with my 'humour; which was never thought 'bad: especially to my equals. Ser-'vants, indeed, I don't matter being 'angry with, when I please: they are 'paid for bearing it, and too-too often 'deserve it, as we have frequently 'taken notice of to one another. And 'moreover, if we keep not servants at 'distance, they will be familiar. I 'always made it a rule to find fault, 'whether reasonable or not, that so I 'might have *no reason* to find fault. 'Young women and servants in gene-'ral, (as worthy Mr. Solmes observes) 'are better governed by fear than love. 'But this my humour as to servants, 'will not either affect you or Miss, 'you know.

'I will make very advantageous 'settlements; such as any common 'friend shall judge to be so. But 'must have all in my own power, while 'I live: because, you know, Madam, 'it is as creditable to the wife, as to 'the husband, that it should be so.

'I am not at fine words. We are 'not children; though it is hoped we 'may have some; for I am a very 'healthy sound man, I bless God for 'it: and never brought home from my 'voyages or travels, *a worser* consti-'tution than I took out with me. I 'was none of those, I will assure you. 'But this I will undertake, that if you 'are the survivor, you shall be at the *least* 'ten thousand pounds the better for 'me. What, in the contrary case, I 'shall be the better for you, I leave to 'you, as you shall think my kindness 'to you shall deserve.

'But one thing, Madam, I should 'be glad of, that Miss Howe might 'not live with us then. [She need 'not know I write thus]—But go 'home to Mr. Hickman, as she is upon 'the point of marriage, I hear: and 'if she behaves dutifully, as she should 'do, to us both, she shall be the bet-'ter; for so I said before.

'You shall manage all things, both 'mine and your own; for I know but 'little of land-matters. All my op-'position to you shall be out of love, 'when I think you take too much 'upon you for your health.

'It will be very pretty for you, I 'should think, to have a man of ex-'perience, in a long winter's evening, 'to sit down by you, and tell you sto-'ries of foreign parts, and the cus-'toms of the nations he has consorted 'with. And I have fine curiosities of 'the Indian growth, such as ladies 'love, and some that even my niece 'Clary, when she was good, never 'saw. These, one by one, as you are 'kind to me, (which I make no ques-'tion of, because I shall be kind to 'you) shall be all yours.—Prettier en-'tertainment by much, than fitting 'with a *too smartish* daughter, some-'times out of humour, and thwarting, 'and vexing, as daughters will, (when 'women-grown especially, as I have 'heard you often observe;) and think-'ing their parents old, without paying 'them the reverence due to years; when, 'as in your case, I make no sort of 'doubt, they are young enough to 'wipe their noses. You understand 'me, Madam.

'As for me myself, it will be very 'happy, and I am delighted with the 'thinking of it, to have, after a pleasant 'ride, or so, a lady of like experience 'with myself, to come home to, and but 'one interest betwixt us: to reckon up 'our comings-in together; and what 'this day and this week has produced—'O how this will increase love!—Most 'mightily will it increase it!—And 'I believe I should never love you 'enough, or be able to shew you all 'my love.

'I hope, Madam, there need not be 'such maiden niceties and hangings 'off, as I may call them, between *us*, '(for

'(for hanging-off sake) as that you 'will deny me a line or two to this 'proposal, written down, although 'you would not answer me so readily 'when I spoke to you; your daughter 'being, I suppose, hard by; for you 'looked round you, as if not willing 'to be over-heard. So I resolved to 'write: that my writing may stand as 'upon record, for my upright mean-'ing; being none of your Lovelaces; 'you will mark that, Madam; but a 'downright, true, honest, faithful 'Englishman. So hope you will not 'disdain to write a line or two to this 'my proposal: and I shall look upon 'it as a great honour, I will assure you, 'and be proud thereof. What can I 'say more?—For you are your own 'mistress, as I am my own master: and 'you shall *always* be your own mis-'tress, be pleased to mark that; for so 'a lady of your prudence and expe-'rience ought to be.

'This is a long letter. But the sub-'ject requires it; because I would not 'write *twice* where *once* would do. So 'would explain my sense and meaning 'at one time.

'I have had writing in my head, '*two whole months very near*; but 'hardly knew how (being unpractised 'in these matters) to begin to write. 'And now, good lady, be favourable 'to *your most humble lover, and obe-'dient servant*,

'ANT. HARLOWE.'

Here's a letter of courtship, my dear! —And let me subjoin to it, that if now, or hereafter, I should treat this hideous lover, who is so free with me to my mother, with asperity, and you should be disgusted at it; I shall think you don't give me that preference in your love, which you have in mine.

And now, which shall I first give you; the answer of my good mamma; or the dialogue that passed between the widow mother, and the pert daughter, upon her letting the latter know that she had a love-letter?

I *think* you shall have the *dialogue*. But let me promise one thing; that if you *think* me too free, you must not let it run in your head, that I am writing of *your* uncle, or of *my* mother; but of a couple of old lovers, no matter whom. Reverence is too apt to be forgotten by children, where the *reverends* forget *first* what belongs to their own characters. A *grave* remark, and therefore at *your* service, my dear.

Well then, suppose my mamma (after twice coming into my closet to me, and as often going out, with very meaning features, and lips ready to burst open, but still closed, as if by compulsion, a speech going off in a slight cough, that never went near the lungs) grown more resolute the third time of entrance, and sitting down by me, thus begin.

Mother. 'I have a very serious mat-'ter to talk with you upon, Nancy, 'when you are disposed to attend to 'matters *within* ourselves, and not let 'matters *without* ourselves wholly en-'gross you.'

A good *selve-ish* speech!—But I thought that friendship, gratitude, and humanity, were matters that ought to be deemed of the most *intimate* con-cern to us. But not to dwell upon words:

Daughter. 'I am *now* disposed to 'attend to every-thing my mamma is 'disposed to say to me.'

M. 'Why then, child—Why then, 'my dear'—[And the good lady's face looked *so* plump, *so* smooth, and *so* shining!]—'I see you are all attention, 'Nancy!—But don't be surprized!— 'Don't be uneasy!—But I have—I have '—Where is it?'—[And yet it lay next her heart, never another near it— So no difficulty to have found it]—'I 'have a *letter*, my dear!'—[And out from her bosom it came: but she still held it in her hand]—'I have a *letter*, 'child.—It is—It is—It is from— 'from a *gentleman*, I assure you!'— [Lifting up her head, and smiling.]

'There is no delight to a daughter,' thought I, 'in such surprizes as seem 'to be *collecting*. I will deprive my 'mother of the satisfaction of making 'a *gradual* discovery.'

D. 'From Mr. Antony Harlowe, I 'suppose, Madam?'

M. [Lips drawn closer: eye raised] 'Why, my dear!—I cannot but own— 'But how, I wonder, could you think 'of Mr. Antony Harlowe?'

D. 'How, Madam, could I think 'of any body *else*?'

M. 'How could you think of any-

'body *elſe!*'—[Angry and drawing back her face.] 'But do you know the 'ſubject, Nancy?'

D. 'You have told it, Madam, by 'your manner of breaking it to me. 'But, indeed, I queſtioned not that 'he had *two* motives in his viſits here '—Both equally agreeable to me; for 'all that family love me dearly.'

M. 'No love loſt, if ſo, between 'you and them. But this' [*Riſing*] 'is what I get—So like your papa!— 'I never could open my heart to *him!*'

D. 'Dear Madam, excuſe me. Be 'ſo good as to open your heart to *me*. '—I don't love the Harlowes—But 'pray excuſe me.'

M. 'You have put me quite out with 'your forward temper!' [Angrily ſitting down again.]

D. 'I will be all patience and atten- 'tion. May I be allowed to read his 'letter?'

M. 'I wanted to *adviſe* with you 'upon it.—But you are ſuch a ſtrange 'creature!—You are always for an- 'ſwering one before one ſpeaks!'

D. 'You'll be ſo good as to forgive 'me, Madam.—But I thought every- 'body (he among the reſt) knew, that 'you had always declared againſt a ſe- 'cond marriage.'

M. 'And ſo I have. But then *it 'was in the mind I was in.* Things 'may offer—'

I ſtared.

M. 'Nay, don't be ſurprized!—I 'don't intend—I don't intend—'

D. 'Not perhaps, in *the mind you 'are in*, Madam.'

M. 'Pert creature!' [Riſing again] —'We ſhall quarrel, I ſee!—There's 'no—'

D. 'Once more, dear Madam, I beg 'your excuſe. I will attend in ſilence. '—Pray, Madam, ſit down again— 'Pray do.' [She ſat down]—'May I 'ſee the letter?'

'No; there are ſome things in it 'you won't like.—Your temper is 'known, I find, to be unhappy. But 'nothing *bad* againſt you; intimations, 'on the contrary, that you ſhall be 'the better for him, if you oblige 'him.'

Not a living ſoul but the Harlowes, I ſaid, thought me ill-tempered: and I was contented that *they* ſhould, who could do as they had done by the moſt univerſally acknowledged ſweetneſs in the world.

Here we broke out a little; but at laſt, ſhe read me ſome of the paſſages in the letter. But not the *moſt mightily* ridiculous; yet I could hardly keep my countenance neither, eſpecially when ſhe came to that paſſage which mentions his *found health*; and at which ſhe ſtopt; ſhe beſt knew why—But ſoon reſuming;

M. 'Well now, Nancy, tell me what 'you think of it.'

D. 'Nay, pray, Madam, tell me 'what *you* think of it.'

M. 'I expect to be anſwered by an 'anſwer; not by a queſtion!—You 'don't *uſe* to be ſo ſhy to ſpeak your 'mind.'

D. 'Not when my mamma com- 'mands me to do ſo.'

M. 'Then ſpeak it now.'

D. 'Without hearing the whole of 'the letter?'

M. 'Speak to what you *have* heard.'

D. 'Why then, Madam—You 'won't be my mamma HOWE, if you 'give way to it.'

M. 'I am ſurprized at your aſſur- 'ance, Nancy!'

D. 'I mean, Madam, you will then 'be my mamma HARLOWE.'

M. 'O dear heart!—But I am not a 'fool.'

And her colour went and came.

D. 'Dear Madam, [But, indeed, 'I don't love a Harlowe—that's what 'I mean] I *am* your child, and *muſt* 'be your child, do what you will.'

M. 'A very pert one, I am ſure, as 'ever mother bore! And you *muſt* be 'my child, do what I *will!*—As much 'as to ſay, you would not, if you 'could help it, if I—'

D. 'How could I have ſuch a thought! '—It would be *forward*, indeed, if I 'had—when I don't know what your 'mind is as to the propoſal:—when 'the propoſal is ſo very advantageous 'a one too.'

M. [Looking a little leſs diſcom- poſed] 'Why, indeed, ten thouſand 'pounds—'

D. 'And to be ſure of outliving 'him, Madam!'

This ſtaggered her a little.

M. '*Sure!*—Nobody can be ſure— 'But it is very likely, that—'

D. 'Not at all, Madam. You was 'going

'going to read something (but stopt) 'about his constitution: his sobriety 'is well known—Why, Madam, these 'gentlemen who have used the sea, and 'been in different climates, and come 'home to relax from cares in a tem- 'perate one, and are sober—are the 'likeliest to live long of any men in 'the world. Don't you see that his 'very skin is a fortification of buff?'

M. 'Strange creature!'

D. 'God forbid, that any-body I 'love and honour, should *marry a man* 'in hopes to *bury him*—But suppose, 'Madam, at your time of life—'

M. '*My* time of life?—Dear heart! '—What is my time of life, pray?'

D. 'Not old, Madam; and that you 'are not, may be your danger!'

As I hope to live, (my dear) my mother smiled, and looked not displeased with me.

M. 'Why, indeed, child—Why, in- 'deed, I must needs say—And then I 'should chuse to do nothing (froward 'as you are sometimes) to hurt *you*.'

D. 'Why, as to that, Madam, I 'can't expect that you should deprive 'yourself of any satisfaction—'

M. '*Satisfaction*, my dear!—I don't 'say, it would be a *satisfaction*—But 'could I do any-thing that would be- 'nefit *you*, it would perhaps be an in- 'ducement to hold *one* conference upon 'the subject.'

D. 'My fortune already will be 'more considerable than my match, if 'I am to have Mr. Hickman.'

M. 'Why so?—Mr. Hickman has 'fortune enough to entitle him to 'yours.'

D. 'If *you* think so, that's enough.'

M. 'Not but I should think the 'worse of myself, if I desired any- 'body's death; but I think, as you 'say, Mr. Antony Harlowe is a healthy 'man, and bids fair for a long life.'

'Bless me,' thought I, 'how shall 'I do to know whether this be an ob- 'jection or a recommendation!'

D. 'Will you forgive me, Madam?'

M. 'What would the girl say?' [Looking as if she was half-afraid to hear what.]

D. 'Only, that if you marry a man 'of *his* time of life, you stand two 'chances instead of one, to be a nurse 'at *your* time of life.'

M. 'Sauce-box!'

D. 'Dear Madam!—What I mean 'is only, that these healthy old men 'sometimes fall into lingering disor- 'ders all at once. And I humbly 'conceive, that the infirmities of age 'are uneasily borne with, where the 'remembrance of the pleasanter season 'comes not in to relieve the healthier 'of the two.'

M. 'A strange girl!—Yet his healthy 'constitution an objection just now!— 'But I always told you, that you know 'either too much to be argued with, 'or too little for me to have patience 'with you.'

D. 'I can't but say, I should be glad 'of your commands, Madam, how to 'behave myself to Mr. Antony Har- 'lowe next time he comes.'

M. 'How to behave yourself!— 'Why, if you retire with contempt 'of him, when he next comes, it will 'be but as you have been used to do of 'late.'

D. 'Then he *is* to come again, Ma- 'dam?'

M. 'And suppose he be?'

D. 'I can't help it, if it be your 'pleasure, Madam. He desires a line 'in answer to his fine letter. If he 'come, it will be in pursuance of that 'line, I presume?'

M. 'None of your arch and pert 'leers, girl!—You know I won't bear 'them. I had a mind to hear what 'you would say to this matter. I have 'not written; but I shall presently.'

D. 'It is mighty good of you, Ma- 'dam, (I hope the man will think so) 'to answer his first application by let- 'ter.—Pity *he should write twice, if* 'once will do.'

M. 'That fetch won't let you into 'my intention, as to what I shall write. 'It is too saucily put.'

D. 'Perhaps I can guess at your in- 'tention, Madam, were it to become 'me so to do.'

M. 'Perhaps I would not make a '*Mr. Hickman* of any man; using him 'the worse for respecting me.'

D. 'Nor, perhaps, would I, Ma- 'dam, if I *liked* his respects.'

M. 'I understand you. But, per- 'haps, it is in *your* power to make 'me hearken, or not, to Mr. Har- 'lowe.'

D. 'Young men, who have proba- 'bly a great deal of time before them, 'need

'need not be in haſte for a wife. Mr. 'Hickman, poor man! muſt ſtay his 'time, or take his remedy.'

M. 'He bears more from you, than a 'man ought.'

D. 'Then, I doubt, he gives a rea-'ſon for the treatment he meets with.'

M. 'Provoking creature!'

D. 'I have but one requeſt to make 'to you, Madam.'

M. 'A *dutiful* one, I ſuppoſe. What 'is it, pray?'

D. 'That if *you* marry, *I* may be 'permitted to live ſingle.'

M. 'Perverſe creature, I'm ſure!'

D. 'How can I expect, Madam, 'that you ſhould refuſe ſuch terms? 'Ten *thouſand pounds!*—At the *leaſt* 'ten thouſand pounds!—A very hand-'ſome propoſal!—So many *fine things* 'too, to give you *one by one!*—Deareſt 'Madam, forgive me!—I hope it is 'not yet ſo far gone, that raillying 'this man will be thought want of duty 'to *you*.'

M. 'Your raillying of *him*, and 'your reverence to *me*, it is plain, have 'one ſource.'

D. 'I hope not, Madam. But ten 'thouſand pounds—'

M. 'Is no unhandſome propoſal.'

D. 'Indeed I think ſo. I hope, 'Madam, you will not be behind-hand 'with him in generoſity.'

M. 'He won't be ten thouſand 'pounds the better for me, if he ſur-'vive me.'

D. 'No, Madam; he can't expect 'that as you have a daughter, and as 'he is a *batchelor, and has not a child!* '—Poor old ſoul!'

M. '*Old ſoul*, Nancy!—And thus to 'call him for being a batchelor, and 'not having a child?—Does this be-'come you?'

D. 'Not *old ſoul* for that, Madam—'But half the ſum; five thouſand 'pounds; you can't engage for leſs, 'Madam.'

M. 'That ſum has *your* approbation 'then?' [Looking as if ſhe'd be even with me.]

D. 'As he leaves it to your generoſity, 'Madam, to reward his kindneſs to 'you, it *can't* be leſs.—Do, dear Ma-'dam, permit me, without incurring 'your diſpleaſure, to call him *poor old* 'ſoul again.'

M. 'Never was ſuch a whimſical 'creature!'—[Turning a way to hide her involuntary ſmile, for I believe I look-ed very archly; at leaſt I intended to do ſo]—'I hate that wicked ſly look. You 'give yourſelf very free airs—Don't 'you?'

D. I ſnatched her hand, and kiſſed it—'My dear mamma, be not angry, 'with your girl!—You have told me, 'that *you* was very lively formerly.'

M. '*Formerly!* Good lack!—But, 'were I to encourage his propoſals, 'you may be ſure, that for Mr. Hick-'man's ſake, as well as yours, I ſhould 'make a wiſe agreement.'

D. 'You have both lived to years of 'prudence, Madam.'

M. 'Yes, I ſuppoſe I am an *old ſoul*, 'too.'

D. '*He* alſo is for making a *wiſe*, '*agreement*, or hinting at one, at leaſt.'

M. 'Well, the ſhort and the long I 'ſuppoſe is this: I have not your con-'ſent to marry.'

D. 'Indeed, Madam, you have not 'my *wiſhes* to marry.'

M. 'Let me tell you, that if pru-'dence conſiſts in wiſhing well to *one's* '*ſelf*, I ſee not but the *young flirts* are 'as prudent as the *old ſouls*.'

D. 'Dear Madam, would you blame 'me, if to wiſh you *not* to marry Mr. 'Antony Harlowe, is to wiſh well to '*myſelf?*'

M. 'You are mighty witty. I wiſh 'you were as dutiful.'

D. 'I am more dutiful, I hope, than 'witty; or I ſhould be a fool, as well 'as a ſaucebox.'

M. 'Let *me* judge of both.—Parents 'are only to live for their children, let 'them deſerve it or not. That's *their* 'dutiful notion!'

D. 'Heaven forbid that I ſhould 'wiſh, if there be two intereſts between 'my mother and me, that my mother 'poſtpone her own for mine! or give 'up any thing that would add to the 'real comforts of her life, to oblige 'me!—Tell me, my dear mamma, if 'you think the cloſing with this pro-'poſal *will?*'

M. 'I ſay, That ten thouſand pounds 'is ſuch an acquiſition to one's family, 'that the *offer* of it deſerves a civil re-'turn.'

D. 'Not the *offer*, Madam: the '*chance* only!—If, indeed, you have a 'view to an increaſe of family, the 'money may provide——'

M. 'You can't keep within tolerable 'bounds!—

'bounds!—That saucy sneer I cannot away with—'

D. 'Dearest, dearest Madam, forgive me; but *old soul* ran in my head again!—Nay, indeed and upon my word, I will not be robbed of that charming smile!' And again I kissed her hand.

M. 'Away, bold creature! Nothing can be so provoking as to be made to smile when one would *chuse*, and *ought*, to be angry.'

D. 'But, dear Madam, if it be to *be*, I presume you won't think of it before *next winter*.'

M. 'What now would the pert one be at?'

D. 'Because he only proposes to entertain you with pretty stories of foreign nations in a winter's evening. Dearest, dearest Madam, let me have the reading of his letter through. I will forgive him all he says about *me*.'

M. 'It may be a very difficult thing, perhaps, for a man of the best sense to write a love-letter, that may not be cavilled at.'

D. 'That's because lovers in their letters hit not the medium. They either write too much nonsense, or too little. But do you call this *odd* soul's letter [No more will I call him *old* soul, if I can help it] a love-letter?'

M. 'Well, well, I see you are averse to this matter. I am not to be your *mother*; *you* will live single, if *I* marry. I had a mind to see if generosity governed you in your views. I shall pursue my own inclinations; and if *they* should happen to be suitable to yours, pray let me for the future be better rewarded by you, than hitherto I have been.'

And away she flung, without staying for a reply.—Vexed, I dare say, that I did not better approve of the proposal—Were it only that the merit of denying might have been all her own, and to lay the stronger obligation upon her saucy daughter.

She wrote such a *widow-like* refusal when she went from me, as might not exclude hope in any other wooer; whatever it may do in Mr. Tony Harlowe.

It will be my part, to take care to beat her off the visit she half-promises to make him, (as you will see in her answer) upon condition that he withdraw his suit. For who knows what effect the old batchelor's exoticks [*Far-fetched and dear-bought* you know is a proverb] might otherwise have upon a woman's mind, wanting nothing but unnecessaries, gewgaws, and fineries, and offered such as are not easily to be met with, or purchased?

Well, but now I give you leave to read here, in this place, the copy of my mother's answer to your uncle's letter. Not one comment will I make upon it. I know my duty better. And here, therefore, taking the liberty to hope, that I may, in your present less disagreeable, though not wholly agreeable situation, provoke a smile from you, I conclude myself, *your ever-affectionate and faithful*

ANNA HOWE.

'MRS. ANNABELLA HOWE, TO ANTONY HARLOWE, ESQ.

'FRIDAY, MAY 19.

'MR. ANTONY HARLOWE,

'SIR,

'IT is not usual, I believe, for our 'sex to answer by pen and ink the first letter on these occasions. The *first* letter! How odd is that! As if I expected another; which I do not. But then I think, as I do not judge proper to encourage your proposal, there is no reason why I should not answer in civility where so great a civility is intended. Indeed, I was always of opinion, that a person was entitled to that, and not to ill-usage, because he had a respect for me. And so I have often and often told my daughter.

'A woman, I think, makes but a poor figure in a man's eye afterwards, and does no reputation to her sex neither, when she behaves like a tyrant to him before-hand.

'To be sure, Sir, if I were to change my condition, I know not a gentleman whose proposal could be more agreeable. Your nephew and your nieces have enough without you: my daughter is a fine fortune without me, and I should take care to double it, living or dying, were I to do such a thing: so nobody need to be the worse for it. But Nancy would not think so.

'All the comfort I know of in children, is, that when young they do with us what they will, and all is

'pretty

'pretty in them to their very faults; 'and when they are grown up, they 'think their parents must live for them 'only; and deny themselves every-'thing for their sakes. I know Nancy 'could not bear a father-in-law. She 'would fly at the very thought of my 'being in earnest to give her one. Not 'that I stand in fear of my daughter 'neither. It is not fit I should. But 'she has her poor papa's spirit. A very 'violent one that was. And one would 'not chuse, you know, Sir, to enter into 'any affair, that, one knows, one must 'renounce a daughter for, or she a mo-'ther.—Except indeed one's heart were '*much* in it; which, I bless God, mine 'is not.

'I have now been a widow these ten 'years; nobody to controul me: and 'I am said not to bear controul: so, 'Sir, you and I are best as we are, I 'believe: nay, I am sure of it: for we 'want not what either has; having both 'more than we know what to do with. 'And I know I could not be in the least 'accountable for any of my ways.

'My daughter, indeed, though she 'is a fine girl, as girls go, [She has too 'much sense, indeed, for one of her sex; 'and knows she has it] is more a check 'to me than one would wish a daugh-'ter to be: for who would chuse to be 'always snapping at each other? But 'she will soon be married; and then, 'not living together, we shall only come 'together when we are pleased, and 'stay away when we are not; and so 'like other lovers, never see any-thing 'but the best sides of each other.

'I own, for all this, that I love her 'dearly; and she me, I dare say: so 'would not wish to provoke her to do 'otherwise. Besides, the girl is so much 'regarded every-where, that having 'lived so much of my prime a widow, 'I would not lay myself open to her 'censures, or even to her indifference, 'you know.

'Your generous proposal requires 'all this explicitness. I thank you for 'your good opinion of me. When I 'know you acquiesce with this my ci-'vil refusal, [And indeed, Sir, I am 'as much in earnest in it, as if I had 'spoken broader] I don't know but 'Nancy and I may, with your permis-'sion, come to see your fine things; 'for I am a great admirer of rarities 'that come from abroad.

'So, Sir, let us only converse occa-'sionally as we meet as we used to do, 'without any other view to each other, 'than good wishes: which I hope may 'not be lessened for this declining. And 'then I shall always think myself *your 'obliged servant*,

'ANNABELLA HOWE.

'*P. S.* I sent word by Mrs. Lori-'mer, that I would write an an-'swer: but would take time for 'consideration. So hope, Sir, you 'won't think it a slight, I did not 'write sooner.'

LETTER XXXII.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

SUNDAY, MAY 21.

I Am too much disturbed in my mind, to think of any-thing but revenge; or I did intend to give thee an account of Miss Harlowe's observations on the play. *Miss Harlowe's* I say. Thou knowest that I hate the name of *Harlowe*; and I am exceedingly out of humour with her, and with her saucy friend.

'What's the matter *now?*' thou'lt ask.

Matter enough; for while we were at the play, Dorcas, who had her orders, and a key to her lady's chamber, as well as a master-key to her drawers and mahogany-chest, closet-key and all, found means to come at some of Miss Howe's last-written letters. The vigilant wench was directed to them by seeing her lady take a letter out of her stays, and put it to the others, before she went out with me—Afraid, as the women upbraidingly tell me, that I should find it *there*.

Dorcas no sooner found them, than she assembled three ready writers of the *Non-apparents*; and *Sally*, and *she*, and *they* employed themselves with the utmost diligence, in making extracts, according to former directions, from these cursed letters, for my use. *Cursed*, I may well call them—Such abuses!—Such virulence!—O this little fury Miss Howe!—Well might her saucy friend (who has been equally free with me, or the occasion could not have been given) be so violent as she lately was, at my

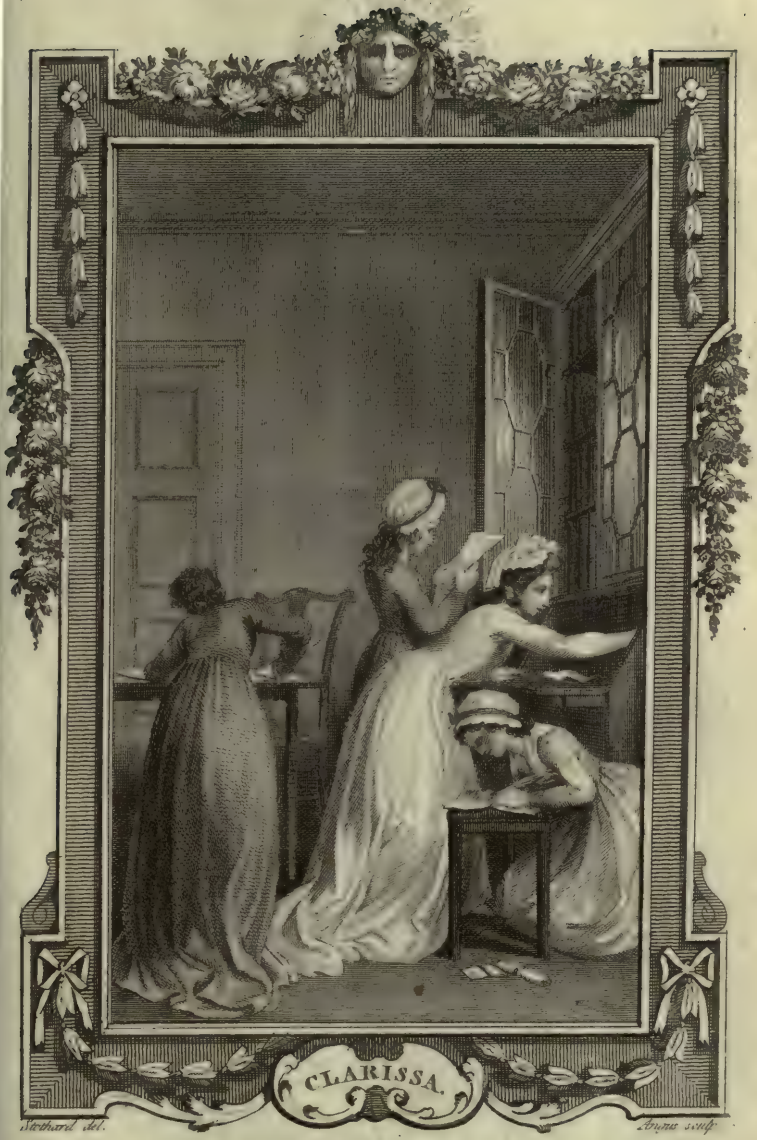

Plate IX. Published as the Act directs by Harrison & Co. Feb.y 14. 1784.

my endeavouring to come at one of these letters.

I was sure, that this fair-one, at so early an age, with a constitution so firm, health so blooming, eyes so sparkling, expectations, therefore, so lively, and hope so predominating, could not be absolutely, and from her own vigilance, so guarded, and so apprehensive, as I have found her to be.

Sparkling eyes, Jack, when the poetical tribe have said all they can for them, are an infallible sign of a rogue, or room for a rogue, in the heart.

Thou mayest go on with thy preachments, and Lord M. with his wisdom of nations, I am now more assured of her than ever. And now my revenge is up, and joined with my love, all resistance must fall before it. And most solemnly do I swear, that Miss Howe shall *come in for her snack*.

And here, just now, is another letter brought from the same little virulent devil. I hope to procure transcripts from that too, very speedily, if it be put to the test; for the saucy fair-one is resolved to go to church this morning; not so much from a spirit of devotion, I have reason to think, as to try whether she can go out without check, controul, or my attendance.

* *

I HAVE been denied breakfasting with her. Indeed she was a little displeased with me last night: because, on our return from the play, I obliged her to pass the rest of the night with the women and me, in their parlour, and to stay till near one. She told me at *parting*, that she expected to have the whole next day to herself. I had not read the extracts then; so was all affectionate respect, awe, and distance; for I had resolved to begin a new course, and, if possible, to banish all jealousy and suspicion from her heart: and yet I had no reason to be much troubled at her past suspicions; since, if a woman will continue with a man whom she suspects, when she can get from him, or *thinks* she can, I am sure it is a very hopeful sign.

* *

SHE is gone. Slipt down before I was aware. She had ordered a chair, on purpose to exclude my personal attendance. But I had taken proper precautions. Will attended her by consent; Peter, the house-servant, was within Will's call.

I had, by Dorcas, represented her danger from Singleton, in order to dissuade her from going at all, unless she allowed me to attend her; but I was answered, with her usual saucy smartness, That if there were no cause of fear of being met with at the play-house, when there were but *two* play-houses, surely there was less at church, when there were so *many* churches. The chairmen were ordered to carry her to St. James's church.

But she would not be so careless of obliging me, if she knew what I have already come at, and how the women urge me on; for they are continually complaining of *the restraint they lie under*, in their behaviour; in their attendance; *neglecting all their concerns in the front-house*; and *keeping this elegant back one entirely free from company*, that she may have no suspicion of them. They doubt not my generosity, they say: but *why*, for my own sake, in Lord M.'s stile, *should I make so long a harvest of so little corn?*

Women, ye reason well. I think I will begin my operations the moment she comes in.

* *

I HAVE come at the letter brought her from Miss Howe to-day. Plot, conjuration, sorcery, witchcraft, all going forward! I shall not be able to see this *Miss Harlowe* with patience. As the nymphs below ask, so do I, Why is *night* necessary? And Sally and Polly upbraidingly remind me of my first attempts upon themselves. Yet *force* answers not my end—And yet it may, if there be truth in that part of the libertine's creed, *That once subdued, is always subdued!* And what woman answers *affirmatively* to the question?

* *

SHE is returned: but refuses to admit me: and insists upon having the day to herself. Dorcas tells me, that she believes her denial is from motives of piety—Oons, Jack, is there impiety in seeing me!—Would it not be the highest act of piety, to reclaim me? And is this to be done by her refusing to see me, when she is in a devouter frame than usual?—But I hate her, hate her heartily! She is old, ugly, and deformed.—But O the blasphemy! Yet she is an

Harlowe: and I do and *can* hate her for that.

But ſince I muſt not ſee her, [She will be miſtreſs of her *own will*, and of her *time*, truly!] let me fill up *my* time, by telling thee what I have come at.

The firſt letter the women met with, is dated April 27*. Where can ſhe have put the *preceding* ones!—It mentions Mr. Hickman as a buſy fellow between them. Hickman had beſt take care of himſelf. She ſays in it, '*I hope* '*you have no cauſe to repent returning* '*by Norris—It is forthcoming on de-* '*mand.*' Now, what the devil can this mean!—Her Norris forthcoming on demand!—The devil take me, if I am *out-Norris'd!*—If ſuch innocents can allow themſelves to plot, (to *Norris*) well may I.

She is ſorry, that *her Hannah can't be with her*—And what if ſhe could?—What could Hannah do for her in *ſuch a houſe as this?*

The women in the houſe are to be found out in one breakfaſting. The women are enraged at both the correſpondents for this; and more than ever make a point of my ſubduing her. I had a good mind to give Miſs Howe to them in full property. Say but the word, Jack, and it ſhall be done.

She is glad that Miſs Harlowe had thoughts of taking me at my word. She wondered I did not offer again. Adviſes her, if I don't ſoon, *not to ſtay with me.* Cautions her, *to keep me at a diſtance; not to permit the leaſt familiarity*—See, Jack!—See, Belford!—Exactly as I thought!—Her vigilance all owing to a cool friend; who can ſit down quietly, and give that advice, which in her own caſe ſhe could not take. What an encouragement to me to proceed in my devices, when I have reaſon to think, that my beloved's reſerves are owing more to Miſs Howe's cautions, than to her own inclinations! But *it is my intereſt to be honeſt*, Miſs Howe tells her—INTEREST, fools!—I thought theſe girls knew, that my *intereſt* was ever ſubſervient to my *pleaſure.*

What would I give to come at the copies of the letters to which thoſe of Miſs Howe are anſwers!

The next letter is dated May 3†. In this the little termagant expreſſes her aſtoniſhment, that her mother ſhould write to Miſs Harlowe, to forbid her to correſpond with her daughter. Mr. Hickman, ſhe ſays, is of opinion, *that ſhe ought not to obey her mother.* How the creeping fellow trims between both! I am afraid, that I muſt puniſh him, as well as this virago; and I have a ſcheme rumbling in my head, that wants but half an hour's muſing to bring into form, that will do my buſineſs upon both. I cannot bear, that the parental authority ſhould be thus deſpiſed, thus trampled under foot—But obſerve the vixen, '*'Tis well he* is *of her opinion; for her mother having ſet her up, ſhe muſt have ſomebody to quarrel with.*—Could a Lovelace have allowed himſelf a greater licence? This girl's a deviliſh rake in her heart. Had ſhe been a man, and one of us, ſhe'd have outdone us all in enterprize and ſpirit.

She wants but very little farther provocation, ſhe ſays, *to fly privately to London. And if ſhe does, ſhe will not leave her till ſhe ſees her either honourably married, or quit of the wretch.*—Here, Jack, the tranſcriber Sally has added a prayer—'For the Lord's ſake, 'dear Mr. Lovelace, get this fury to 'London!'—Her fate, I can tell thee, Jack, if we had her among us, ſhould not be ſo long deciding as her friend's. What a gantlope would ſhe run, when I had done with her, among a dozen of her own pitileſs ſex, whom my charmer ſhall never ſee!—But more of this anon.

I find by this letter, that my ſaucy captive had been drawing the characters of every varlet of ye. Nor am I ſpared in it more than you. '*The man's a fool,* '*to be ſure, my dear.*'—Let me periſh, if they either of them find me one!—'*A ſilly fellow, at leaſt.*'—Curſed contemptible!—'*I ſee not but they are a* '*ſet of infernals*'—There's for thee, Belford!—'*and be the Beelzebub.*'—There's for thee, Lovelace!—And yet ſhe would have her friend marry a Beelzebub.—And what have any of us done, (within the knowledge of Miſs Harlowe) that ſhe ſhould give ſuch an account of us, as ſhould excuſe ſo much abuſe from Miſs Howe!—But the occaſion that ſhall warrant this abuſe is to come!

She blames her, for *not admitting*

* See Vol. III. Letter LX.

† See Vol. III. Letter LXVIII.

Miſs

Miss Partington to her bed—'*Watchful* 'as you are, what could have happened? '—*If violence were intended, he would* 'not stay for the night.' I am ashamed to have this hinted to me by this virago. Sally writes upon this hint—'See, Sir, what is expected from you. 'An hundred and an hundred times 'have we told you of this.'—And so they have. But, to be sure, the advice from *them* was not of half the efficacy as it will be from *Miss Howe*.—'*You* 'might have sat up after her, or not 'gone to bed,' proceeds she.

But can there be such apprehensions between them, yet the one advise her to stay, and the other resolve to wait my imperial motion for marriage? I am glad I know that.

She approves of my proposal of Mrs. Fretchville's house. She puts her upon expecting settlements; upon naming a day: and concludes with insisting upon her writing, notwithstanding her mother's prohibitions; or bids her *take the consequence*. Undutiful wretches! How I long to vindicate against them both the insulted parental character!

Thou wilt say to thyself, by this time, 'And can this proud and insolent girl 'be the same Miss Howe, who sighed 'for honest Sir George Colmar; and 'who, but for this her beloved friend, 'would have followed him in all his 'broken fortunes, when he was obliged 'to quit the kingdom?'

Yes, she is the *very* same. And I always found in others, as well as in myself, that a first passion thoroughly subdued, made the conqueror of it a rover; the conquerefs a tyrant.

Well, but now comes mincing in a letter from one who has *the honour of dear Miss Howe's commands**, to acquaint Miss Harlowe, that Miss Howe is *exceffively concerned for the concern she has given her*.

'*I have great temptations, on this* 'occafion,' says the prim Gothamite, '*to expreſs my own reſentments upon* 'your preſent ſtate.'

'*My own reſentments!*'—And why did he not fall into this *temptation?*—Why, truly, becaufe he knew not what that ftate was which gave him fo *tempting* a fubject—*Only by a conjecture*, and fo-forth.

He then dances in his ftile, as he does in his gaite! To be fure, to be fure, he muft have made the grand tour, and come home by the way of Tipperary.

'*And being moreover forbid*,' fays the prancer, '*to enter into the cruel fub-* 'ject.'—This prohibition was a mercy to thee, friend Hickman!—But why *cruel fubject*, if thou knoweft not what it is, but *conjecture* only from the diſturbance it gives to a girl, that is her mother's diſturbance, will be thy diſturbance, and the diſturbance, in turn, of every-body with whom ſhe is intimately acquainted, unleſs I have the humbling of her?

In another letter†, the little fury profeſſes, *that ſhe* will *write, and that no* man *ſhall write for her*, as if ſome medium of that kind had been propoſed. She approves of her fair friend's intention *to leave me, if ſhe can be received by her relations*. I am *a wretch, a fooliſh wretch. She hates me for my teazing ways. She has juſt made an acquaintance with one who knows a vaſt deal of my private hiſtory*. A curſe upon her, and upon her hiſtoriographer!—'*The man is really a villain, an exe-* 'crable one.'—Devil take her!—*Had I a dozen lives, I might have forfeited them all twenty crimes ago*. An odd way of reckoning, Jack!

Miſs Betterton, Miſs Lockyer, are named—*The man* (ſhe irreverently repeats) ſhe again calls *a villain*. Let me periſh, I repeat, if I am called a villain for nothing!—She *will have her uncle* (as Miſs Harlowe requeſts) *founded about receiving her. Dorcas is to be attached to her intereſt: my letters are to be come at by ſurprize or trick*.

What thinkeſt thou of this, Jack?

Miſs Howe is alarmed at my attempt to come at a letter of hers.

Were I to come at the knowledge of her freedoms with my character, ſhe ſays, *ſhe ſhould be afraid to ſtir out without a guard*. I would adviſe the vixen to get her guard ready.

I am at the head of a gang of wretches, [Thee, Jack, and thy brother varlets, ſhe owns ſhe means] *who join together to betray innocent creatures, and to ſupport one another in their villainies*—What ſayeſt thou to this, Belford?

She wonders not at her melancholy reflections for meeting me, for being forced upon me, and tricked by me.—I hope,

* See Vol. III. Letter LXX.

† See Letter XI. of this Volume.

Jack, thou'lt have done preaching after this!

But she comforts her, *that she will be both a warning and example to all her sex.* I hope the sex will thank me for this.

The nymphs had not time, they say, to transcribe all that was worthy of my resentment in this letter: so I must find an opportunity to come at it myself. Noble rant, they say, it contains—But I am a *seducer*, and an hundred vile fellows, in it.—*And the devil*, it seems, *took possession of my heart, and of the hearts of all her friends, in the same dark hour, in order to provoke her to meet me.* Again, *There is a fate in her error*, she says.—Why then should she grieve?—*Adversity is her shining time*, and I can't tell what—Yet never to thank the man to whom she owes the *shine!*

In the next letter*, Wicked as I am, *she fears I must be her lord and master.*

I hope so.

She retracts what she said against me in her last.—My behaviour to my Rosebud; Miss Harlowe to take possession of Mrs. Fretchville's house; I to stay at Mrs. Sinclair's; the stake I have in my country; my reversions: my œconomy; my person; my address, [Something like in all this!] are brought in my favour, to induce her now *not* to leave me. How do I love to puzzle these *long-sighted* girls!

Yet *my teazing ways*, it seems, *are intolerable.*—Are women only to teaze, I trow?—The sex may thank themselves for teaching me to out-teaze them. So the headstrong Charles XII. of Sweden taught the Czar Peter to beat him, by continuing a war with the Muscovites against the ancient maxims of his kingdom.

'*May eternal vengeance* PURSUE '*the villain*,' [Thank Heaven, she does not say *overtake*] '*if he give room* '*to doubt his honour!*'—Women can't swear, Jack—sweet souls! they can only curse.

I am said, *to doubt her love*—Have I not reason? And she, *to doubt my ardour*—Ardour, Jack!—Why, 'tis very right—Women, as Miss Howe says, and as every rake knows, love ardours!

She apprizes her of the *ill success of the application made to her uncle*—By Hickman no doubt!—I must have this fellow's ears in my pocket, very quickly, I believe.

She says, *She is equally shocked, and enraged against all her family: Mrs. Norton's weight has been tried upon Mrs. Harlowe, as well as Mr. Hickman's upon the uncle.* '*But never were* '*there*,' says the vixen, '*such deter-*'*mined brutes in the world. Her un-*'*cle concludes her ruined already.*'—Is not that a call upon me, as well as a reproach?—*They all expected applications from her when in distress—but were resolved not to stir an inch to save her life.* She was *accused of premeditation and contrivance.* Miss Howe *is concerned*, she tells her, *for the revenge my pride may put me upon taking for the distance she has kept me at*—And well she may.—It is now evident to her, that she must be mine (for her *cousin* Morden, it seems, is set against her too)—An act of necessity, of convenience!—Thy friend, Jack, to be already made a woman's convenience! Is this to be borne by a Lovelace?

I shall make great use of this letter. From Miss Howe's hints of what passed between her uncle Harlowe and Hickman, [It *must* be Hickman] I can give room for my *invention* to play; for she tells her, that *she will not reveal all.* I must endeavour to come at this letter myself. I must have the very words: extracts will not do. This letter, when I have it, must be my compass to steer by.

The fire of friendship then blazes and crackles. I never before imagined that so fervent a friendship could subsist between two sister-beauties, both toasts. But even *here* it may be inflamed by opposition, and by that contradiction which gives vigour to female spirits of a warm and romantick turn.

She raves about *coming up, if by so doing she could prevent so noble a creature from stooping too low, or save her from ruin.*—One need to support another! I think I will contrive to bring her up.

How comes it to pass, that I cannot help being pleased with this virago's spirit, though I suffer by it? Had I her but here, I'd engage, in a week's time,

* See Letter XVII.

to

to teach her submission without reserve. What pleasure should I have in breaking such a spirit! I should wish for her but for one month, in all, I think. She would be too tame and spiritless for me after that. How sweetly pretty to see the two lovely friends, when humbled and tame, both sitting in the darkest corner of a room, arm in arm, weeping and sobbing for each other!—And I their emperor, their then *acknowledged* emperor, reclined at my ease in the same room, uncertain to which I should first, grand signior like, throw out my handkerchief!

Again mind the girl: *she is enraged at the Harlowes: she is angry at her own mother; she is exasperated against her foolish and low-vanity'd Lovelace.* FOOLISH, a little toad! [God forgive me for calling a virtuous girl a toad!] '*Let us stoop to lift the wretch out of his* '*dirt, though we soil our fingers in doing* '*it! He has not been guilty of direct in-*'*decency to you.*'—It seems *extraordinary* to Miss Howe that I have not. '*Nor* '*dare he.*'—She should be sure of that. If women have such things in their heads, why should not I in my heart? —*Not so much of a devil as that comes to neither. Such villainous intentions would have shewn themselves before now if I had them.*—Lord help them!

She then puts her friend upon urging for *settlements*, *licence*, and so-forth.—*No room for delicacy now*, she says; and tells her what she shall say, *to bring all forward from me.*—Is it not as clear to thee, Jack, as it is to me, that I should have carried my point long ago, but for this vixen? She *reproaches her for having* MODESTY'D *away*, as she calls it, *more than one opportunity, that she ought not to have slipt.*—Thus thou seest, that the noblest of the sex mean nothing in the world by their shyness and distance, but to pound the poor fellow they dislike not, when he comes into their purlieus.

Though *trick'd into this man's power*, she tells her, *she is not meanly subjugated to it.* There are hopes of my reformation, it seems, *from my reverence for her; since before her I never had any reverence for what was good.* I am *a great, a specious deceiver.* I thank her for this, however. A good moral use, she says, may be made of *my having prevailed upon her to swerve.* I am glad that any good may flow from my actions.

Annexed to this letter is a paper the most saucy that ever was written of a mother by a daughter. There are in it such free reflections upon widows and batchelors, that I cannot but wonder how Miss Howe came by her learning. Sir George Colmar, I can tell thee, was a greater fool than thy friend, if she had it all for nothing.

The contents of this paper acquaint Miss Harlowe, that her uncle Antony has been making proposals of marriage to her mother.

The old fellow's heart ought to be a tough one, if he succeed; or she who broke that of a much worthier man, the late Mr. Howe, will soon get rid of him.

But be this as it may, the stupid family is made more irreconcileable than ever to their goddess-daughter for old Antony's thoughts of marrying: so I am more secure of her than ever. And yet I believe at last, that my tender heart will be moved in her favour. For I did not *wish*, that she should have *nothing* but persecution and distress.—But why loves she the *brutes*, as Miss Howe justly calls them, so much; *me* so little?

I have still more unpardonable transcripts from other letters.

LETTER XXXIII.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

THE next letter is of such a nature, that, I dare say, these proud rogues would not have had it fall into my hands for the world*.

I see by it to what her displeasure with me, in relation to my proposals, was owing. They were not summed up, it seems, with the warmth, with the *ardour*, which she had expected.

This whole letter was transcribed by Dorcas, to whose lot it fell. Thou shalt have copies of them all at full length shortly.

Men of our cast, this little devil says, *she fancies, cannot have the ardours that honest men have.* Miss Howe has

* See Letter XXII.

very

very pretty fancies, Jack. Charming girl! Would to Heaven I knew whether my fair-one anſwers her as freely as ſhe writes! 'Twould vex a man's heart, that this virago ſhould have come honeſtly by her *fancies*.

Who knows but I may have half a dozen creatures to get off my hands, before I engage for life?—Yet, leſt this ſhould mean me a compliment, as if I would reform, ſhe adds her belief, *that ſhe muſt not expect me to be honeſt on this ſide my grand climacterick*. She has an high opinion of her ſex, to think they can charm ſo long a man ſo well acquainted with their *identicalneſs*.

'*He to ſuggeſt delays*,' ſhe ſays, '*from a compliment to be made to Lord* '*M.!*'—Yes, I, my dear—Becauſe a man has not been accuſtomed to be dutiful, muſt he never be dutiful?—In ſo important a caſe as this too! the hearts of his whole family engaged in it? '*You did indeed*,' ſays ſhe, '*want an* '*interpoſing friend—But were I to have* '*been in your ſituation, I would have* '*torn his eyes out, and left it to his heart* '*to furniſh the reaſon for it.*' See! ſee! What ſayeſt thou to this, Jack?

'*Villain—Fellow that he is!*' follow. And for what? Only for wiſhing that the next day were to be my happy one; and for being dutiful to my neareſt relation.

'*It is the cruelleſt of fates*,' ſhe ſays, '*for a woman to be forced to have a* '*man whom her heart deſpiſes.*'—That is what I wanted to be ſure of.—I was afraid, that my beloved was too conſcious of her talents; of her ſuperiority! I was afraid that ſhe *indeed* deſpiſed me.—And I cannot bear to think ſhe does. But, Belford, I do not intend that this lady ſhall be bound down by ſo cruel a fate. Let me periſh, if I marry a woman who has given her moſt intimate friend reaſon to ſay, *ſhe deſpiſes me!*—A Lovelace to be *deſpiſed*, Jack!

'*His clenched fiſt to his forehead on* '*your leaving him in juſt diſpleaſure*;'—that is, when ſhe was not ſatisfied with my ardours, if it pleaſe ye!—I remember the motion: but her back was towards me at the time*. Are theſe watchful ladies all eye?—But obſerve what follows; '*I wiſh it had been a* '*poll-ax, and in the hands of his worſt* '*enemy.*'

I *will* have patience, Jack; I *will* have patience! *My* day is at hand.—Then will I ſteel my heart with theſe remembrances.

But here is a ſcheme to be thought of, in order to *get my fair prize out of my hands, in caſe I give her reaſon to ſuſpect me*.

This indeed alarms me. Now the contention becomes arduous. Now wilt thou not wonder, if I let looſe my plotting genius upon them both. I will not be *out-Norris'd*, Belford.

But once more, *ſhe has no notion*, ſhe ſays, *that I can or dare to mean her diſhonour*. But—'*Then the man is a* '*fool—that's all.*'—I ſhould indeed be a fool, to proceed as I do, and mean matrimony! '*However, ſince you are* '*thrown upon a fool*,' ſays ſhe, '*marry* '*the fool, at the firſt opportunity; and* '*though I doubt that this man will be* '*the moſt unmanageable of fools, as all* '*witty and vain fools are, take him as* '*a puniſhment, ſince you cannot as a* '*reward.*'—Is there any bearing this, Belford?

But *ſuch men as myſelf, are the men that women do not naturally hate*.—True as the goſpel, Jack!—The truth is out at laſt. Have I not always told thee ſo? Sweet creatures and true Chriſtians theſe young girls! They love their enemies. But rakes in their hearts all of them! Like turns to like; *that's* the thing. Were I not well aſſured of the truth of this obſervation of the vixen, I ſhould have thought it worth while, if not to be a good man, to be more of an hypocrite, than I found it needful to be.

But in the letter I came at to-day, while ſhe was at church, her ſcheme is farther opened; and a curſed one it is.

Mr. Lovelace then tranſcribes from his ſhort-hand notes, that part of Miſs Howe's letter, which relates to the deſign of engaging Mrs. Townſend (in caſe of neceſſity) to give her protection till Colonel Morden come†: and repeats his vows of revenge; eſpecially for theſe words; that ſhould he attempt anything that would make him ob-

* She tells Miſs Howe, that ſhe ſaw this motion in the pier-glaſs. See P. 497.

† See Letter XXX. P. 517.

noxious

noxious to the laws of ſociety, ſhe might have a fair riddance of him, either by flight or the gallows; no matter which.

He then adds—'Tis my pride, to ſubdue girls who know *too much* to *doubt* their knowledge; and to convince them, that they know *too little*, to defend themſelves from the inconveniences of knowing *too much*.

How paſſion drives a man on! *proceeds he*.—I have written a prodigious quantity in a very few hours! Now my reſentments are warm, I will ſee, and perhaps will puniſh, this proud, this *double*-armed beauty, I have ſent to tell her, that I muſt be admitted to ſup with her. We have neither of us dined. She refuſed to drink tea in the afternoon: and I believe neither of us will have much ſtomach to our ſupper.

LETTER XXXIV.

MIS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

SUNDAY MORNING, 7 O'CLOCK.

I Was at the play laſt night with Mr. Lovelace and Miſs Horton. It is, you know, a deep and moſt affecting tragedy in the reading. You have my remarks upon it, in the little book you made me write upon the principal acting plays. You will not wonder, that Miſs Horton, as well as I, was greatly moved at the repreſentation, when I tell you, and have ſome pleaſure in telling you, that Mr. Lovelace himſelf was very ſenſibly touched with ſome of the moſt affecting ſcenes. I mention this in praiſe of the author's performance; for I take Mr. Lovelace to be one of the moſt hard-hearted men in the world. Upon my word, my dear, I do.

His behaviour, however, on this occaſion, and on our return, was unexceptionable; only that he would oblige me to ſtay to ſupper with the women below, when we came back, and to ſit up with him and them till near one o'clock this morning. I was reſolved to be even with him; and indeed I am not very ſorry to have the pretence; for I love to paſs the Sundays by myſelf.

To have the better excuſe to avoid his teazing, I am ready dreſſed to go to church this morning. I will go only to St. James's church, and in a *chair*; that I may be ſure I can go out and come in when I pleaſe, without being intruded upon by him, as I was twice before.

NEAR NINE O'CLOCK.

I HAVE your kind letter of yeſterday. He knows I have. And I ſhall expect, that he will be inquiſitive next time I ſee him after your opinion of his propoſals. I doubted not your approbation of them, and had written an anſwer on that preſumption; which is ready for him. He muſt *ſtudy* for occaſions of procraſtination, and to diſoblige me, if now any-thing happens to ſet us at variance again.

He is very importunate to ſee me. He has deſired to attend me to church. He is angry that I have declined to breakfaſt with him. I am ſure that I ſhould not have been at my own liberty if I had—I bid Dorcas tell him, that I deſired to have this day to myſelf. I would ſee him in the morning as early as he pleaſed. She ſays, ſhe knows not what ails him, but that he is out of humour with every-body.

He has ſent again in a peremptory manner. He warns me of Singleton. I ſent him word, that if *he* was not afraid of Singleton at the play-houſe laſt night, *I* need not at church to-day: ſo many churches to *one* playhouſe. I have accepted of his ſervant's propoſed attendance. But he is quite diſpleaſed, it ſeems. I don't care. I will not be perpetually at his inſolent beck.—Adieu, my dear, till I return. The chair waits. He won't ſtop me, ſure, as I go down to it.

* *

I DID not ſee him as I went down. He is, it ſeems, exceſſively out of humour. Dorcas ſays, Not with me neither, ſhe believes: but ſomething has vexed him. This is put on perhaps to make me dine with him. But I will not, if I can help it. I ſhan't get rid of him for the reſt of the day, if I do.

* *

HE was very earneſt to dine with me. But I was reſolved to carry this one ſmall point; and ſo denied to dine myſelf. And indeed I was endeavouring to write to my couſin Morden; and had begun three different times, without being able to pleaſe myſelf.

He

He was very busy in writing, Dorcas says; and pursued it without dining, because I denied him my company.

He afterwards *demanded*, as I may say, to be admitted to afternoon-tea with me: and appealed by Dorcas to his behaviour to me last night; as if, as I sent him word by her, he thought he had a merit in being unexceptionable. However, I repeated my promise to meet him as early as he pleased in the morning, or to breakfast with him.

Dorcas says, he raved: I heard him loud, and I heard his servant fly from him, as I thought. You, my dearest friend, say, in one of yours*, that you must have somebody to be angry at, when your mother sets you up. I should be very loth to draw comparisons: but the workings of passion, when indulged, are but too much alike, whether in man or woman.

* *

He has just sent me word, that he insists upon supping with me. As we had been in a good train for several days past, I thought it not prudent to break with him for little matters. Yet, to be, in a manner, threatened into his will, I know not how to bear that.

* *

While I was considering, he came up, and, tapping at my door, told me, in a very angry tone, he must see me this night. He could not rest, till he had been told what he had done to deserve the treatment I gave him.

Treatment I give him! A wretch! Yet perhaps he has nothing new to say to me. I shall be very angry with him.

As the lady could not know what Mr. Lovelace's designs were, nor the cause of his ill-humour, it will not be improper to pursue the subject from his letter.

Having described his angry manner of demanding, in person, her company at supper; he proceeds as follows.

'"Tis hard,' answered the fair perverse, 'that I am to be so little my 'own mistress. I will meet you in 'the dining-room half an hour hence.'

'I went down to wait that half 'hour. All the women set me hard 'to give her cause for this tyranny. 'They demonstrated, as well from the 'nature of the *sex*, as of the *case*, 'that I had nothing to hope for from 'my tameness, and could meet with 'no worse treatment, were I to be 'guilty of the last offence. They 'urged me vehemently to *try* at least 'what effect some greater familiarities 'than I had ever taken with her, would 'have: and their arguments being 'strengthened by my just resentments 'on the discoveries I had made, I was 'resolved to take *some liberties*, and, 'as they were received, to take *still 'greater*, and lay all the fault upon 'her *tyranny*. In this humour I went 'up, and never had paralytick so little command of his joints, as I had, 'while I walked about the dining-'room, attending her motions.

'With an erect mien she entered, 'her face averted, her lovely bosom 'swelling, and the more charmingly 'protuberant for the erectness of her 'mien. O Jack! that sullenness and 'reserve should add to the charms of 'this haughty maid! But in every at-'titude, in every humour, in every 'gesture, is beauty beautiful.—By her 'averted face, and indignant aspect, I 'saw the dear insolent was disposed to 'be angry—But by the fierceness of 'mine, as my trembling hands seized 'hers, I soon made fear her predomi-'nant passion. And yet the moment I 'beheld her, my heart was dastardized; 'and my reverence for the virgin pu-'rity so visible in her whole deport-'ment, again took place. Surely, 'Belford, this is an angel. And yet, 'had she not been known to be a fe-'male, they would not from *babyhood* 'have dressed her as such, nor would 'she, but upon that conviction, have 'continued the dress.

"Let me ask you, Madam, I be-"seech you tell me, what I have done "to deserve this distant treatment?"

"And let me ask *you*, Mr. Love-"lace, why are my retirements to be "thus invaded?—What can you have "to say to me since last night, that I "went with you so much against my "will to the play? And after sitting "up with you, equally against my "will, till a very late hour?"

* See Vol. III. Letter LXVIII. Paragraph 2.

"This

" *This* I have to say, Madam, that " I cannot bear to be kept at this dis- " tance from you under the same roof."

" *Under the same roof*, Sir!—How " came you——"

" Hear me out, Madam," [letting ' go her trembling hands, and snatch- ' ing them back again with an eager- ' ness that made her start]—" I have " a thousand things to say, to talk of, " relating to our present and future " prospects; but when I want to open " my whole soul to you, you are al- " ways contriving to keep me at a dis- " tance. You make me inconsistent " with myself. Your heart is set up- " on delays. You must have views " that you will not own. Tell me, " Madam, I conjure you to tell me, " this moment, without subterfuge or " reserve, in what light am I to appear " to you in future? I cannot bear this " distance. The suspense you hold " me in I cannot bear."

" In what light, Mr. Lovelace!" ' [Visibly terrified.] " In no bad " light, I hope.—Pray, Mr. Love- " lace, do not grasp my hands so hard." ' [Endeavouring to withdraw them.] " Pray let me go."

" You *hate* me, Madam."

" I hate nobody, Sir."

" You *hate* me, Madam," repeated I.

' Instigated and resolved, as I came ' up, I wanted some new provocation. ' The devil indeed, as soon as my an- ' gel made her appearance, crept out ' of my heart; but he had left the door ' open, and was no farther off than my ' elbow.

" You come up in no good temper, I " see, Mr. Lovelace—But pray be not " violent—*I have done you no hurt*— " Pray be not violent!"

" Sweet creature!" And I clasped ' one arm about her, holding one hand ' in my other.—" *You have done me no* " *hurt*—" I could have devoured her ' —But restraining myself—" You " have done me the greatest hurt!—In " what have I deserved the distance " you keep me at?"—I knew not what ' to say.

' She struggled to disengage herself— " Pray, Mr. Lovelace, let me with- " draw. I know not why this is. I " know not what I have done to offend " you. I see you are come with *a* " *design to quarrel with me*. If you " would not terrify me by the ill-hu- " mour you are in, permit me to with- " draw. I will hear all you have to " say another time—To-morrow morn- " ing, as I sent you word—But indeed " you frighten me. I beseech you, if " you have any value for me, permit " me to withdraw."

' Night, *mid*-night, *is* necessary, ' Belford. Surprize, terror, *must* be ' necessary to the ultimate trial of this ' charming creature, say the women ' below what they will. I could not ' hold my purposes. This was not ' the first time that I had *intended* to ' try if she could forgive.

' I kissed her hand with a fervour, as ' if I would have left my lips upon it. —" Withdraw, then, dearest and ever- " dear creature. Indeed I entered in " a very ill humour. I cannot bear " the distance at which you so cause- " lessly keep me. Withdraw, Ma- " dam, since it is your will to with- " draw; and judge me generously; " judge me but as I deserve to be " judged; and let me hope to meet you " to-morrow morning early in such a " temper as becomes our present situa- " tion, and my future hopes."

' And so saying, I conducted her to ' the door, and left her there. But ' instead of going down to the women, ' I went into my own chamber, and ' locked myself in; ashamed of being ' awed by her majestick loveliness, and ' apprehensive virtue, into so great a ' change of purpose, notwithstanding ' I had such just provocations from ' the letters of her saucy friend, found- ' ed on her own representations of ' facts and situations between herself ' and me.'

The lady (dated Sunday night) thus describes her terrors, and Mr. Lovelace's behaviour, on the occasion.

On my entering the dining-room, he took my hand in his, in such a humour, as I saw plainly he was resolved to quarrel with me—*And for what?—What had I done to him?*—I never in my life beheld in any-body such wild, such angry, such impatient airs. I was terrified; and instead of being as angry as I intended to be, I was forced to be all mildness. I can hardly remember what were his first words, I was so frighted. But, ' *You hate me,*

'*Madam! You hate me, Madam!*' were ſome of them—with ſuch a fierceneſs—I wiſhed myſelf a thouſand miles diſtant from him. 'I hate nobody,' ſaid I: 'I thank God I hate nobody—'You terrify me, Mr. Lovelace—Let 'me leave you.'—The man, my dear, looked *quite ugly*—I never ſaw a man look ſo ugly as paſſion made him look—*And for what?*—And he ſo graſped my hands!—Fierce creature!—He ſo graſped my hands! In ſhort, he ſeemed by his looks, and by his words, (once putting his arms about me) to wiſh me to provoke him. So that I had nothing to do but to beg of him (which I did repeatedly) to permit me to withdraw: and to promiſe to meet him at his own time in the morning.

It was with a very ill grace that he complied, on that condition; and at parting he kiſſed my hand with ſuch a ſavageneſs, that a redneſs remains upon it ſtill.

Do you not think, my dear, that I have reaſon to be incenſed at him, my ſituation conſidered? Am I not under a *neceſſity*, as it were, of quarrelling with him; at leaſt every other time I ſee him? No prudery, no coquetry, no tyranny in my heart, or in my behaviour to him, that I know of. No affected procraſtination. Aiming at nothing but decorum. He as much concerned, and ſo he ought to think, as I, to have that obſerved. Too much in his power: caſt upon him by the cruelty of my relations. No other protection to fly to but his. One plain path before us; yet ſuch embarraſſes, ſuch difficulties, ſuch ſubjects for doubt, for cavil, for uneaſineſs; as faſt as one is obviated, another to be introduced, and not by myſelf—know not how introduced—What pleaſure can I propoſe to myſelf in meeting ſuch a wretch?

Perfect for me, my deareſt Miſs Howe, perfect for me, I beſeech you, your kind ſcheme with Mrs. Townſend; and I will then leave this man.

My temper, I believe, is changed. No wonder if it be. I queſtion whether ever it will be what it was. But I cannot make *him* half ſo uneaſy by the change, as I am *myſelf*. See you not how, from ſtep to ſtep, he grows upon me?—I tremble to look back upon his encroachments. And now to give me cauſe to apprehend *more evil from him, than indignation will permit me to expreſs!*—O my dear, perfect your ſcheme, and let me fly from ſo ſtrange a wretch!

Yet, to be firſt an eloper from my friends to him, as the world ſuppoſes; and now to be ſo from him, [To *whom* I know not!] how hard to one who ever endeavoured to ſhun intricate paths! But he muſt certainly have views in quarrelling with me thus, which he dare not own!—Yet what can they be?—I am terrified but to think of what they may be!

Let me *but* get from him!—As to my reputation, if I leave him—That is already too much wounded for me, now, to be careful about any-thing, but how to act ſo, as that my own heart ſhall not reproach me. As to the world's cenſure, I muſt be content to ſuffer that—An unhappy compoſition, however.—What a wreck have my fortunes ſuffered, to be obliged to throw overboard ſo many valuables, to preſerve, indeed, the *only* valuable!—A compoſition that once it would have half broken my heart to think there would have been the leaſt danger that I ſhould be obliged to ſubmit to.

You, my dear, could not be a ſtranger to my moſt ſecret failings, although you would not tell me of them. What a pride did I take in the applauſe of every-one!—What a pride even in ſuppoſing I had *not* that pride!—Which concealed itſelf from my unexamining heart under the ſpecious veil of *humility*, doubling the merit to myſelf by the *ſuppoſed*, and indeed *imputed*, gracefulneſs in the manner of conferring benefits, when I had not a ſingle merit in what I did, vaſtly over-paid by the pleaſure of doing ſome little good, and impelled, as I may ſay, by talents given me—For what!—Not to be proud of.

So deſirous, in ſhort, to be conſidered as an *example!* A vanity which my partial admirers put into my head!—And ſo ſecure in my own virtue!

I am puniſhed enough, enough mortified, for this my vanity—I hope *enough*, if it ſo pleaſe the all-gracious Inflictor: ſince now, I verily think, I more deſpiſe myſelf for my preſumptuous ſelf-ſecurity, as well as vanity, than ever I ſecretly vaunted myſelf on my good inclinations: *ſecretly*, I ſay, however; for indeed I had not given myſelf leiſure to reflect, till I was thus mortified,

mortified, how very imperfect I was; nor how much truth there is in what divines tell us, That we sin in our best performances.

But I was very young—But here let me watch over myself again: for in those four words, *I was very young*, is there not a palliation couched, that were enough to take all efficacy from the discovery and confession?

What strange imperfect beings!—But *self* here, which is at the bottom of all we do, and of all we wish, is the grand misleader.

I will not apologize to you, my dear, for these grave reflections. Is it not enough to make the unhappy creature look into herself, and endeavour to detect herself, who, from such an high reputation, left to proud and presumptuous self, should, by one thoughtless step, be brought to the dreadful situation I am in?

Let me, however, look forward: to despond would be to add sin to sin. And whom have I to raise me up, whom to comfort me, if I desert *myself?*—Thou, O Father, who, I hope, hast not yet deserted, hast not yet cursed me!—For I am thine!—It is fit that mediation should supply the rest.

* *

I WAS so disgusted with him, as well as frighted by him, that on my return to my chamber, in a fit of passionate despair, I tore almost in two, the answer I had written to his proposals.

I will see him in the morning, because I promised I would. But I will go out, and that without him, or any attendant. If he account not tolerably for his sudden change of behaviour, and a proper opportunity offer of a private lodging in some creditable house, I will not any more return to this:—at present I think so.—And there will I either attend the perfecting of your scheme; or, by your epistolary mediation, make my own terms with the wretch; since it is your opinion, that I must be his, and cannot help myself: or, perhaps, take a resolution to throw myself at once into Lady Betty's protection; and this will hinder him from making his insolently-threatened visit to Harlowe Place.

The lady writes again on Monday evening; and gives her friend an account of all that passed between herself and Mr. Lovelace that day; and of her being terrified out of her purpose, of going out: but Mr. Lovelace's next letters giving a more ample account of all, hers are omitted.

It is proper, however, to mention, that she re-urges Miss Howe (from the dissatisfaction she has reason for from what passed between Mr. Lovelace and herself) to perfect her scheme in relation to Mrs. Townsend. She concludes this letter in these words:

I should say something of your last favour, (but a few hours ago received) and of your dialogue with your mother—Are you not very whimsical, my dear? I have but two things to wish for on this occasion.—The one, that your charming pleasantry had a *better subject* than that you find for it in this dialogue—The other, that my situation were not such, as must too often damp that pleasantry in you, and will not permit me to enjoy it, as I used to do. Be, however, happy in yourself, though you cannot in *your*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LETTER XXXV.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

MONDAY MORNING, MAY 22.

NO generosity in this lady. None at all. Wouldst thou not have thought, that after I had permitted her to withdraw, primed for mischief as I was, she would meet me next morning early; and that with a smile; making me one of her best curtsies?

I was in the dining-room before six, expecting her. She opened not her door. I went up stairs and down; and hemm'd; and called Will; called Dorcas; threw the doors hard to; but still she opened not her door. Thus till half an hour after eight, fooled I away my time; and then (breakfast ready) I sent Dorcas to request her company.

But I was astonished, when (following the wench, as she did at the first

invitation) I saw her enter dressed, all but her gloves, and those and her fan in her hand; in the same moment bidding Dorcas direct Will to get her a chair to the door.

'Cruel creature,' thought I, 'to 'expose me thus to the derision of the 'women below!

'Going abroad, Madam?'

'I am, Sir.'

I looked cursed silly, I am sure. 'You 'will breakfast first, I hope, Madam;' and a very humble strain; yet with an hundred tenter-hooks in my heart.

Had she given me more notice of her intention, I had perhaps wrought myself up to the frame I was in the day before, and begun my vengeance. And immediately came into my head all the virulence that had been transcribed for me from Miss Howe's letters, and in that letter which I had transcribed myself.

Yes, she would drink one dish; and then laid her gloves and fan in the window just by.

I was perfectly disconcerted. I hemm'd, and was going to speak several times; but I knew not in what key. 'Who's modest now!' thought I. 'Who's insolent now!'—How a tyrant of a woman confounds a bashful man! She was acting Miss Howe, I thought; and I the spiritless Hickman.

At last, 'I *will* begin,' thought I. She a dish—I a dish.

Sip, her eyes her own, she; like an haughty and imperious sovereign, conscious of dignity, every look a favour.

Sip, like her vassal, I; lips and hands trembling, and not knowing that I sipp'd or tasted.

'I was—I was—' I sipp'd—(drawing in my breath and the liquor together, though I scalded my mouth with it) 'I was in hopes, Madam—'

Dorcas came in just then.—'Dor-'cas,' said she, 'is a chair gone for?'

'Damn'd impertinence,' thought I, 'thus to put me out in my speech!' And I was forced to wait for the servant's answer to the insolent mistress's question.

'William is gone for one, Madam.'

This cost me a minute's silence before I could begin again. And then it was with my hopes, and my hopes, and my hopes, that I should have been early admitted to—

'What weather is it, Dorcas?' said she, as regardless of me as if I had not been present.

'A little lowering, Madam—The 'sun is gone in—It was very fine half 'an hour ago.'

I had no patience. Up I rose. Down went the tea-cup, saucer and all—'Confound the weather, the sun-shine, 'and the wench!—Be gone for a devil, 'when I am speaking to your lady, 'and have so little opportunity given 'me.'

Up rose the saucy-face, half-frighted; and snatched from the window her gloves and fan.

'You must not go, Madam!'—Seizing her hand—'By my soul you 'must not.'

'*Must not*, Sir!—But I must—You 'can curse your maid in my absence, 'as well as if I were present—Except—'Except—you intend for *me*, what you 'direct to *her*.'

'Dearest creature, you must not go—'You must not leave me. Such determined scorn!—Such contempts!—'Questions asked your servant of no 'meaning but to break in upon me—'I cannot bear it!'

'Detain me not,' struggling. 'I will 'not be witheld. I like you not, nor 'your ways. You sought to quarrel 'with me yesterday, *for no reason in the 'world that I can think of, but because 'I was too obliging*. You are an ungrateful man; and I hate you with my 'whole heart, Mr. Lovelace.'

'Do not make me desperate, Madam. 'Permit me to say, that you shall not 'leave me in this humour. Wherever 'you go, I will attend you. Had Miss 'Howe been my friend, I had not been 'thus treated. It is but too plain to 'whom my difficulties are owing. I 'have long observed, that every letter 'you received from *her*, makes an alteration in your behaviour to *me*. She 'would have *you* treat *me*, as *she* treats 'Mr. Hickman, I suppose: but neither 'does that treatment become your admirable temper to offer, nor me to receive.'

This startled her. She did not care to have me think hardly of Miss Howe.

But recollecting herself—'Miss 'Howe,' said she, 'is a friend to virtue, and to good men. If she like 'not you, it is because you are not one 'of those.'

'Yes,

'Yes, Madam; and therefore to speak of Mr. Hickman and myself, as you both, I suppose, think of each, she treats *him* as she would not treat a *Lovelace*.—I challenge you, Madam, to shew me but one of the many letters you have received from her, where I am mentioned.'

'Miss Howe is just; Miss Howe is good,' replied she. 'She writes, she speaks, of every-body as they deserve. If you point me out but any one occasion, upon which you have reason to build a merit to yourself, as either just or good, or even generous, I will look out for her letter on that occasion, [If such an occasion there be, I have certainly acquainted her with it;] and will engage it shall be in your favour.'

Devilish severe! and as indelicate as severe, to put a modish man upon hunting backward after his own merits.

She would have flung from me: 'I will *not* be detained, Mr. Lovelace. I *will* go out.'

'Indeed you must not, Madam, in this humour.' And I placed myself between her and the door.—And then, fanning, she threw herself into a chair, her sweet face all crimsoned over with passion.

I cast myself at her feet. 'Be gone, Mr. Lovelace,' said she, with a rejecting motion, her fan in her hand; 'for your own sake leave me!—My soul is above thee, man!'—with both her hands pushing me from her!—'Urge me not to tell thee, how sincerely I think my soul above thee!—Thou hast in mine, a proud, a too proud heart, to contend with!—Leave me, and leave me for ever!—Thou hast a proud heart to contend with!'

Her air, her manner, her voice, were bewitchingly noble, though her words were so severe.

'Let me worship an angel,' said I, 'no woman. Forgive me, dearest creature!—Creature if you be, forgive me!—Forgive my inadvertencies!—Forgive my inequalities!—Pity my infirmities!—Who is equal to my Clarissa?'

I trembled between admiration and love; and wrapped my arms about her knees, as she sat. She tried to rise at the moment; but my clasping round her thus ardently, drew her down again; and never was woman more affrighted, But free as my clasping emotion might appear to her apprehensive heart, I had not, at the instant, any thought but what reverence inspired. And till she had actually withdrawn, [Which I permitted under promise of a speedy return, and on her consent to dismiss the chair] all the motions of my heart were as pure as her own.

She kept not her word. An hour I waited before I sent to claim her promise. She could not possibly see me yet, was her answer. As soon as she could, she would.

Dorcas says, she still excessively trembled; and ordered her to give her hartshorn and water.

A strange apprehensive creature! Her terror is too great for the occasion.—Evils are often greater in apprehension than in reality. Hast thou never observed, that the terrors of a bird caught, and actually in the hand, bear no comparison to what we might have supposed those terrors would be, were we to have formed a judgment of the same bird by it's shyness before it was taken?

Dear creature!—Did she never romp? Did she never, from girlhood to now, hoyden? The *innocent* kinds of freedom taken and allowed on these occasions, would have familiarized her to greater. Sacrilege but to touch the hem of her garment!—Excess of delicacy!—O the consecrated beauty! how can she think to be a wife?

But how do I know till I try, whether she may not by a less alarming treatment be prevailed upon, or whether [*Day*, I have done with thee!] she may not *yield to nightly surprizes?*—This is still the burden of my song, I can marry her when I will. And if I do, after prevailing, (whether by *surprize*, or by *reluctant consent*) whom but myself shall I have injured?

* *

It is now eleven o'clock. She will see me as soon as she can, she tells Polly Horton, who made her a tender visit, and to whom she is less reserved than to any-body else. Her emotion, she assures her, was not owing to perverseness, to nicety, to ill-humour; but to *weakness of heart*. She has not *strength of mind* sufficient, she says, to enable her to support her condition.

Yet what a contradiction!—*Weakness of heart*, says she, with *such a strength of will!*—O Belford! she is a lion-

lion-hearted lady, in every case where her honour, her punctilio rather, calls for spirit. But I have had reason more than once in her case, to conclude, that the passions of the gentle, slower to be moved than those of the quick, are the most flaming, the most irresistible, when raised.—Yet her charming body is not equally organized. The unequal partners pull two ways; and the divinity within her tears her silken frame. But had the same soul informed a masculine body, never would there have been a truer hero.

MONDAY, TWO O'CLOCK.

NOT yet visible!—My beloved is not well. What *expectations* had she from my ardent admiration of her!—More rudeness than revenge apprehended. Yet, how my soul thirsts for revenge upon both these ladies! I must have recourse to my *master-strokes*. This cursed project of Miss Howe and her Mrs. Townsend, (if I cannot contrive to render it abortive) will be always a sword hanging over my head. Upon every little disobligation my beloved will be for taking wing; and the pains I have taken to deprive her of every other refuge or protection, in order to make her absolutely dependent upon me, will be all thrown away. But perhaps I shall find out a smuggler to counterplot Miss Howe.

Thou remembrest the contention between the sun and the north-wind, in the fable; which should first make an honest traveller throw off his cloak.

Boreas began first. He puffed away most vehemently; and often made the poor fellow curve and stagger; but with no other effect, than to cause him to wrap his surtout the closer about him.

But when it came to Phœbus's turn, he so played upon the traveller with his beams, that he made him first unbutton, and then throw it quite off—Nor left he, till he obliged him to take to the friendly shade of a spreading beach; where prostrating himself on the thrown-off cloak, he took a comfortable nap.

The victor-god then laughed outright, both at Boreas and the traveller, and pursued his radiant course, shining upon, and warming and cherishing a thousand new objects, as he danced along: and at night, when he put up his fiery coursers, he diverted his Thetis with the relation of his pranks in the passed day.

I, in like manner, will discard all my boisterous inventions: and if I can oblige my sweet traveller to throw aside, *but for one moment*, the cloak of her rigid virtue, I shall have nothing to do, but, like the sun, to bless new objects with my rays. But my chosen hours of conversation and repose, after all my peregrinations, will be devoted to my goddess.

* *

AND now, Belford, according to my new system, I think this house of Mrs. Fretchville an embarrass upon me. I will get rid of it; for some time at least. Mennell, when I am out, shall come to her, enquiring for me. 'What for?' thou'lt ask. What for!—Hast thou not heard what has befallen poor Mrs. Fretchville?—Then I'll tell thee.

One of her maids, about a week ago, was taken with the small-pox. The rest kept their mistress ignorant of it till Friday; and *then* she came to know it by accident. The greater half of the plagues poor mortals of condition are tormented with, proceed from the servants they take, partly for shew, partly for use, and with a view to lessen their cares.

This has so terrified the widow, that she is taken with all the symptoms that threaten an attack from that dreadful enemy of fair faces.—So must not think of removing: yet cannot expect, that we should be further delayed on her account.

She now wishes, with all her heart, that she had known her own mind, and gone into the country at first when I treated about the house: this evil then had not happened! A cursed cross accident for *us*, too!—High-ho! Nothing else, I think, in this mortal life! People need not study to bring crosses upon themselves by their petulancies.

So this affair of the house will be over; at least, for one while. But then I can fall upon an expedient which will make amends for this disappointment. I must move *slow*, in order to be *sure*. I have a charming contrivance or two in my head, even supposing my beloved should get away, to bring her back again.

But what is become of Lord M. I trow, that he writes not to me, in answer to my invitation? If he would send me such a letter as I could shew, it might go a great way towards a perfect reconciliation,

ciliation. I have written to Charlotte about it. He shall soon hear from me, and that in a way he won't like, if he writes not quickly. He has sometimes threatened to disinherit *me*: but if I should renounce *him*, it would be but justice, and would vex him ten times more, than any-thing he can do, will vex me. Then, the settlements unavoidably delayed, by his neglect!—How shall I bear such a life of procrastination!—I, who, as to my will, and impatience, and so-forth, am of the true *lady-make*, and can as little bear controul and disappointment as the best of them!

* *

ANOTHER letter from Miss Howe. I suppose it is *that* which she promises in her last to send her relating to the courtship between old Tony the uncle, and Annabella the mother. I should be extremely rejoiced to see it. No more of the smuggler-plot in it, surely! This letter, it seems, she has put in her pocket. But I hope I shall soon find it deposited with the rest.

MONDAY EVENING.

AT my repeated request she condescended to meet me in the dining-room to afternoon-tea, and not before.

She entered with bashfulness, as I thought; in a pretty confusion, for having carried her apprehensions too far. Sullen and slow moved she towards the tea-table.—Dorcas present, busy in tea-cup preparations. I took her reluctant hand, and pressed it to my lips—'Dearest, 'loveliest of creatures, why this dis-'tance? Why this displeasure?—How 'can you thus torture the faithfullest 'heart in the world?'

She disengaged her hand. Again I would have snatched it.

'Be quiet,' peevishly withdrawing it. And down she sat; a gentle palpitation in the beauty of beauties indicating mingled sullenness and resentment; her snowy handkerchief rising and falling, and a sweet flush overspreading her charming cheeks.

'For God's sake, Madam!'—And a third time I would have taken her repulsing hand.

'And for the same sake, Sir; no 'more teazing.'

Dorcas retired; I drew my chair nearer hers, and with the most respectful tenderness took her hand; and told her, that I could not forbear to express my apprehensions, (from the distance she was so desirous to keep me at) that if any man in the world was more *indifferent* to her, to use no harsher word, than another, it was the unhappy wretch before her.

She looked steadily upon me for a moment, and with her other hand, not withdrawing that I held, pulled her handkerchief out of her pocket; and by a twinkling motion urged forward a tear or two, which having arisen in each sweet eye, it was plain by that motion, she would rather have dissipated: but answered me only with a sigh, and an averted face.

I urged her to speak; to look up at me; to bless me with an eye more favourable.

I had reason, she told me, for my complaint of her indifference. She saw nothing in my mind that was generous. I was not a man to be obligedor favoured. My strange behaviour to her since Saturday night, *for no cause at all that 'she knew of*, convinced her of this. Whatever hopes she had conceived of me, were utterly dissipated: all my ways were disgustful to her.

This cut me to the heart. The guilty, I believe, in every case, less patiently bear the detecting truth, than the innocent do the degrading falsehood.

I bespoke her patience, while I took the liberty to account for this change on my part.—I re-acknowledged the pride of my heart, which could not bear the thought of that want of preference in the heart of a lady whom I hoped to call mine, which she had always manifested. Marriage, I said, was a state that was not to be entered upon with indifference on either side.

'It is insolence,' interrupted she, 'it 'is a presumption, Sir, to expect tokens 'of value, without resolving to *deserve* 'them. You have no whining creature 'before you, Mr. Lovelace, overcome 'by weak motives, to love where there 'is no merit. Miss Howe can tell you, 'Sir, that I never loved the *faults* of 'my friend; nor ever wished her to 'love me for mine. It was a rule with 'us not to spare each other. And would 'a man who has nothing but faults, '(for pray, Sir, what are your virtues?) 'expect that I should shew a value for 'him?

'him? Indeed, if I did, I ſhould not 'deſerve even *his* value; but ought to 'be deſpiſed by him.'

'Well have you, Madam, kept up 'to this noble manner of thinking. 'You are in no danger of being de-'ſpiſed for any marks of tenderneſs or 'favour ſhewn to the man before you. 'You have been perhaps, *you'll* think, '*laudably* ſtudious of making and tak-'ing occaſions to declare, that it was 'far from being owing to your *choice*, 'that you had any thoughts of me. 'My whole ſoul, Madam, in all it's 'errors, in all it's wiſhes, in all it's 'views, had been laid open and naked 'before you, had I been encouraged by 'ſuch a ſhare in your confidence and 'eſteem, as would have ſecured me 'againſt your apprehended worſt con-'ſtructions of what I ſhould from time 'to time have revealed to you, and con-'ſulted you upon. For never was there 'a franker heart; nor a man ſo ready 'to accuſe himſelf,' [*This, Belford, is true.*] 'But you know, Madam, how 'much otherwiſe it has been between 'us.—Doubt, diſtance, reſerve, on your 'part, begat doubt, fear, awe, on mine. '—How little confidence! as if we ap-'prehended each other to be a plotter 'rather than a lover. How have I 'dreaded every letter that has been 'brought you from Wilſon's!—And 'with reaſon: ſince the laſt, from which 'I expected ſo much, on account of the 'propoſals I had made you in writing, 'has, if I may judge by the effects, and 'by your denial of ſeeing me yeſter-'day, (though you could go abroad, 'and in a *chair* too, to avoid my at-'tendance on you) ſet you againſt me 'more than ever.'

'I was guilty, it ſeems, of going to 'church,' ſaid the indignant charmer; 'and without the company of a man, 'whoſe choice it would not have been 'to go, had I not gone—I was guilty 'of deſiring to have the whole Sunday 'to myſelf, after *I* had obliged you, 'againſt my will, at a play; and after 'you had detained me (equally to my 'diſlike) to a very late hour over-night. '—Theſe were my faults: for theſe I 'was to be puniſhed: I was to be com-'pelled to ſee you, and to be terrified 'when I did ſee you, by the moſt ſhock-'ing ill-humour that was ever ſhewn 'to a creature in my circumſtances, and 'not bound to bear it. You have pre-'tended to find free fault with my fa-'ther's temper, Mr. Lovelace: but the 'worſt that he ever ſhewed *after* mar-'riage, was not in the leaſt to be com-'pared to what you have ſhewn twenty 'times *before-hand*.—And what are 'my proſpects with you, at the very 'beſt?—My indignation riſes againſt 'you, Mr. Lovelace, while I ſpeak to 'you, when I recollect the many in-'ſtances, equally ungenerous and un-'polite, of your behaviour to one whom 'you have brought into diſtreſs—And 'I can hardly bear you in my ſight.'

She turned from me, ſtanding up; and lifting up her folded hands, and charming eyes ſwimming in tears, 'O 'my father!' ſaid the inimitable crea-ture, 'you might have ſpared your 'heavy curſe, had you known how I 'have been puniſhed, ever ſince my 'ſwerving feet led me out of your gar-'den-doors to meet this man!'—Then, ſinking into her chair, a burſt of paſſion-ate tears forced their way down her glowing cheeks.

'My deareſt life,' taking her ſtill folded hands in mine, 'who can bear 'an invocation ſo affecting, though ſo 'paſſionate?'

And, as I hope to live, my noſe tingled, as I once, when a boy, remem-ber it did, (and indeed once more very lately) juſt before ſome tears came into my eyes; and I durſt hardly truſt my face in view of hers.

'What have I done to deſerve this 'impatient exclamation?—Have I, at 'any time, by word, by deeds, by looks, 'given you cauſe to doubt my honour, 'my reverence, my *adoration*, I may 'call it, of your virtues? All is owing 'to miſapprehenſion, I hope, on both 'ſides. Condeſcend to clear up but 'your part, as I will mine, and all muſt 'ſpeedily be happy.—Would to Hea-'ven I loved that Heaven as I love 'you! And yet, if I doubted a return 'in love, let me periſh if I ſhould know 'to wiſh you mine!—Give me hope, 'deareſt creature, give me but hope, 'that I am your preferable choice!— 'Give me but hope, that you hate me 'not: that you do not *deſpiſe me*.'

'O Mr. Lovelace, we have been long 'enough together, to be tired of each 'other's humours and ways; ways and 'humours ſo different, that perhaps 'you ought to diſlike *me*, as much as 'I do *you*.—I think—I think, that I

'cannot

'cannot make an anſwerable return to
'the value you profeſs for me. My
'temper is utterly ruined. You have
'given me an ill opinion of all man-
'kind; of yourſelf in particular: and
'withal ſo bad a one of myſelf, that I
'ſhall never be able to look up, having
'utterly and for ever loſt all that ſelf-
'complacency, and conſcious pride,
'which are ſo neceſſary to carry a wo-
'man through this life with tolerable
'ſatisfaction to herſelf.'

She pauſed. I was ſilent. 'By my
'ſoul,' thought I, 'this ſweet creature
'will at laſt undo me!'

She proceeded:—'What now re-
'mains, but that you pronounce me free
'of all obligation to you? And that
'you hinder me not from purſuing the
'deſtiny that ſhall be allotted me?'

Again ſhe pauſed. I was ſtill ſilent; meditating whether to renounce all further deſigns upon her; whether I had not received ſufficient evidence of a virtue, and of a greatneſs of ſoul, that could not be queſtioned or impeached.

She went on:—'Propitious to me be
'your ſilence, Mr. Lovelace!—Tell
'me, that I am free of all obligation
'to you. You know, I never made
'*you* promiſes. You know, that you
'are not under any to *me*.—My broken
'fortunes I matter not——'

She was proceeding—'My deareſt
'life,' ſaid I, 'I have been all this
'time, though you fill me with doubts
'of your favour, buſy in the nuptial
'preparations. I am actually in treaty
'for equipage.'

'*Equipage*, Sir!—Trappings, tinſel!
'—What is equipage—what is life—
'what is any-thing, to a creature ſunk
'ſo low as I am in my own opinion!—
'Labouring under a father's curſe!—
'Unable to look backward without
'ſelf-reproach, or forward without
'terror!—Theſe reflections ſtrengthen-
'ed by every croſs accident!—And
'what but croſs accidents befal me!—
'All my darling ſchemes daſhed in
'pieces, all my hopes at an end; deny
'me not the liberty to refuge myſelf in
'ſome obſcure corner, where neither
'the enemies you have made me, nor
'the few friends you have left me,
'may ever hear of the ſuppoſed raſh-
'one, till thoſe happy moments are at
'hand, which ſhall expiate for all!'

I had not a word to ſay for myſelf. Such a war in my mind had I never known. Gratitude, and admiration of the excellent creature before me, combating with villainous habit, with reſolutions ſo premeditatedly made, and with views ſo much gloried in!—An hundred new contrivances in my head, and in my heart, that to be honeſt, as it is called, muſt all be given up, by a heart delighting in intrigue and difficulty—Miſs Howe's virulences endeavoured to be recollected—Yet recollection refuſing to bring them forward with the requiſite efficacy—I had certainly been a loſt man, had not Dorcas come ſeaſonably in, with a letter.—On the ſuperſcription written—'*Be pleaſed, Sir, to open it now.*'

I retired to the window—opened it—It was from Dorcas herſelf.—Theſe the contents—'Be pleaſed to detain my
'lady: a paper of importance to tran-
'ſcribe. I will cough when I have
'done.'

I put the paper in my pocket, and turned to my charmer, leſs diſconcerted, as ſhe, by that time, had alſo a little recovered herſelf.—'One favour,
'deareſt creature—Let me but know,
'whether Miſs Howe approves or diſ-
'approves of my propoſals?—I know
'her to be my enemy. I was intend-
'ing to account to you for the change
'of behaviour you accuſed me of at
'the beginning of the converſation;
'but was diverted from it by your ve-
'hemence. Indeed, my beloved crea-
'ture, you were *very* vehement. Do
'you think, it muſt not be matter of
'high regret to me, to find my wiſhes
'ſo often delayed and poſtponed in fa-
'vour of your predominant view to a
'reconciliation with your relations who
'will not be reconciled to you?—To
'this was owing your declining to ce-
'lebrate our nuptials before we came
'to town, though you were ſo attro-
'ciouſly treated by your ſiſter, and
'your whole family; and though ſo
'ardently preſſed to celebrate by me—
'To this was owing the ready offence
'you took at my four friends; and at
'the unavailing attempt I made to ſee
'a dropt letter; little imagining, from
'what two ſuch ladies could write to
'each other, that there could be room
'for mortal diſpleaſure.—To this was
'owing the week's diſtance you held
'me at, till you knew the iſſue of ano-
'ther application.—But when they had
'rejected that; when you had ſent my

'cold-received propoſals to Miſs Howe 'for her approbation or advice, as indeed 'I adviſed; and had honoured me with 'your company at the play on Satur-'day night, (my whole behaviour un-'objectible to the laſt hour;) muſt not, 'Madam, the ſudden change in your 'conduct the very next morning, aſto-'niſh and diſtreſs me?—And this per-'ſiſted in with ſtill ſtronger declara-'tions, after you had received the im-'patiently-expected letter from Miſs 'Howe; muſt I not conclude, that all 'was owing to her influence; and that 'ſome other application or project was 'meditating, that made it neceſſary to 'keep me again at diſtance till the reſult 'were known, and which was to de-'prive me of you for ever? for was not 'that your conſtantly propoſed preli-'minary?—Well, Madam, might I 'be wrought up to a half-phrenzy by 'this apprehenſion; and well might I 'charge you with hating me.—And 'now, deareſt creature, let me know, 'I once more aſk you, what is Miſs 'Howe's opinion of my propoſals?'

'Were I diſpoſed to debate with you, 'Mr. Lovelace, I could very eaſily 'anſwer your fine harangue. But at 'preſent, I ſhall only ſay, that your 'ways have been very unaccountable. 'You ſeem to me, if your meanings were 'always juſt, to have taken great pains 'to embarraſs them. Whether owing 'in you to the want of a clear head, or a 'ſound heart, I cannot determine; but 'it is to the want of one of them, I ve-'rily think, that I am to aſcribe the 'greateſt part of your ſtrange conduct.'

'Curſe upon the heart of the little 'devil,' ſaid I, 'who inſtigates you to 'think ſo hardly of the faithfulleſt 'heart in the world!'

'How dare you, Sir!' And there ſhe ſtopt; having almoſt overſhot herſelf; as I deſigned ſhe ſhould.

'How dare I *what*, Madam?' And I looked with meaning. 'How dare I 'what?'

'Vile man!—And do you—' And there again ſhe ſtopt.

'Do I *what*, Madam?—And why '*vile man?*'

'How dare you curſe *any-body* in my 'preſence?'

O the ſweet receder! But that was not to go off ſo with a Lovelace.

'Why then, deareſt creature, is 'there *any-body* that inſtigates you?—'If there be, again I curſe them, be 'they whom they will.'

She was in a charming pretty paſſion. And this was the firſt time that I had the odds in my favour.

'Well, Madam, it is juſt as I 'thought. And now I know how to 'account for a temper that I hope is 'not *natural* to you.'

'Artful wretch! And is it thus you 'would entrap me? But know, Sir, 'that I received letters from nobody 'but Miſs Howe. Miſs Howe likes 'ſome of your ways as little as I do; 'for I have ſet every-thing before her. 'Yet ſhe is thus far *your* enemy, as ſhe 'is mine. She thinks I ſhould not re-'fuſe your offers; but endeavour to 'make the beſt of my lot. And now 'you have the truth. Would to Hea-'ven you were capable of dealing with 'equal ſincerity!'

'I *am*, Madam. And here, on my 'knee, I renew my vows, and my ſup-'plication, that you will make me 'yours. Yours for ever. And let 'me have cauſe to bleſs you and Miſs 'Howe in the ſame breath.'

To ſay the truth, Belford, I had before begun to think, that the vixen of a girl, who certainly likes not Hickman, was in love with *me*.

'Riſe, Sir, from your too ready 'knees, and mock me not.'

'*Too-ready knees!*' thought I. 'Though this humble poſture ſo little 'affects this proud beauty, ſhe knows 'not how much I have obtained of 'others of her ſex, nor how often I 'have been forgiven for the laſt at-'tempts by kneeling.'

'*Mock you*, Madam!' And I aroſe, and re-urged her for the day. I blamed myſelf at the ſame time, for the invitation I had given to Lord M. as it might ſubject me to delay from his infirmities: but told her, that I would write to him to excuſe me, if ſhe had no objection; or to give him the day ſhe would give me, and not wait for him, if he could not come in time.

'My day, Sir,' ſaid ſhe, 'is never. 'Be not ſurprized. A perſon of po-'liteneſs judging between us, would 'not be ſurprized that I ſay ſo. But 'indeed, Mr. Lovelace,' [and wept through impatience] 'you either know 'not how to treat with a mind of the 'leaſt degree of delicacy, notwith-'ſtanding your birth and education, or

'you

'you are an ingrateful man; and' [after a pauſe] 'a *worſe* than ingrateful one. 'But I will retire. I will ſee you again 'to-morrow. I cannot before. I think 'I hate you. You *may* look. Indeed 'I think I hate you. And if, upon a 're-examination of my own heart, I 'find I do, I would not for the world 'that matters ſhould go on farther be-'tween us.'

But I ſee, I ſee, ſhe does not *hate* me! How it would mortify my vanity, if I thought there was a woman in the world, much more this, that could *hate* me! 'Tis evident, villain as ſhe thinks me, that I ſhould not be an *odious* villain, if I could but at laſt in *one* inſtance ceaſe to be a villain! She could not hold it, determined as ſhe had thought herſelf, I ſaw by her eyes, the moment I endeavoured to diſſipate her apprehenſions, on my *too-ready knees*, as ſhe calls them. The moment the rough covering my teazing behaviour has thrown over her affections is quite removed, I doubt not to find all ſilk and ſilver at the bottom, all ſoft, bright, and charming.

I was however too much vexed, diſconcerted, mortified, to hinder her from retiring. And yet ſhe had not gone, if Dorcas had not coughed.

The wench came in, as ſoon as her lady had retired, and gave me the copy ſhe had taken. And what ſhould it be but of the anſwer the truly-admirable creature had intended to give to my written propoſals in relation to ſettlements?

I have but juſt dipt into this affecting paper. Were I to read it attentively, not a wink ſhould I ſleep this night. To-morrow it ſhall obtain my ſerious conſideration.

LETTER XXXVI.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

TUESDAY MORNING, MAY 23.

THE dear creature deſires to be excuſed ſeeing me till evening. She is not very well as Dorcas tells me.

Read here, if thou wilt, the paper tranſcribed by Dorcas. It is impoſſible that I ſhould proceed with my projects againſt this admirable woman, were it not that I am reſolved, after a few trials more, if as nobly ſuſtained as thoſe ſhe has already paſſed through, to make her (if ſhe really hate me not) legally mine.

'TO MR. LOVELACE.

'WHEN a woman is married, that 'ſupreme earthly obligation 'requires that in all inſtances where 'her huſband's real honour is con-'cerned, ſhe ſhould yield her own will 'to his. But, before-hand, I could 'be glad, conformably to what I have 'always ſignified, to have the moſt ex-'plicit aſſurances, that every poſſible 'way ſhould be tried to avoid litiga-'tion with my father. Time and pa-'tience will ſubdue all things. My 'proſpects of happineſs are extremely 'contracted. A huſband's right will 'be always the ſame. In my life-time 'I could wiſh nothing to be done of 'this ſort. Your circumſtances, Sir, 'will not oblige you to extort violently 'from him what is in his hands. All 'that depends upon *me*, either with re-'gard to my perſon, to my diverſions, 'or to the œconomy that no married 'woman, of whatever rank or quality, 'ſhould be above inſpecting, ſhall be 'done, to prevent a neceſſity for ſuch 'meaſures being taken. And if there 'will be no *neceſſity* for them, it is to 'be hoped that motives *leſs* excuſable 'will not have force—Motives which 'muſt be founded in a littleneſs of 'mind which a woman, who has *not* 'that littleneſs of mind, will be under 'ſuch temptations as her duty will 'hardly be able at all times to check, to 'deſpiſe her huſband for having; eſ-'pecially in caſes where her own fa-'mily, ſo much a part of herſelf, and 'which will have obligations upon her '(though then but *ſecondary* ones) 'from which ſhe can never be freed, is 'intimately concerned.

'This article, then, I urge to your 'moſt ſerious conſideration, as what 'lies next my heart. I enter not here 'minutely into the fatal miſunderſtand-'ing between them and you: the fault 'may be in both. But, Sir, *yours* 'was the foundation-fault: at leaſt, 'you gave a too plauſible pretence for 'my brother's antipathy to work upon. 'Condeſcenſion was no part of your 'ſtudy. You choſe to bear the im-'putations laid to your charge, rather

'than to make it your endeavour to 'obviate them.

'But this may lead into hateful re-'crimination—Let it be remembered, 'I will only say, in this place, that, in '*their* eye, you have robbed them of 'a daughter they doated upon; and 'that their resentments on this occa-'sion rise but in proportion to their 'love, and their disappointment. If 'they were faulty in some of the mea-'sures they took, while they them-'selves did not think so, who shall 'judge for *them?* You, Sir, who will 'judge every-body as you please, and 'will let nobody judge you in *your* 'own particular, must not be *their* 'judge.—It may therefore be expected, 'that they will stand out.

'As for *myself*, Sir, I must leave 'it [So seems it to be destined] to your 'justice, to treat me as you shall think 'I deserve: but if your future beha-'viour to *them* is not governed by that 'harsh-sounding implacableness, which 'you charge upon some of *their* tem-'pers, the splendor of your family, and 'the excellent character of *some* of 'them, (of *all* indeed, unless your own 'conscience furnishes you with one '*only* exception) will, on better consi-'deration, do every-thing with them: 'for they *may* be overcome; perhaps, 'however, with the more difficulty, 'as the greatly prosperous less bear 'controul and disappointment than 'others: for I will own to you, that I 'have often in secret lamented, that 'their great acquirements have been a 'snare to them; perhaps as great a snare, 'as some *other* accidentals have been 'to you; which being less immediately 'your own gifts, you have still less 'reason than they to value yourself 'upon them.

'Let me only, on this subject, fur-'ther observe, that condescension is not 'meanness. There is a glory in yield-'ing, that hardly any violent spirit 'can judge of. My brother perhaps 'is no more sensible of *this* than you. 'But as you have talents, which he 'has not, (who, however, has, I hope, 'that regard for morals, the want of 'which makes one of his objections to 'you) I could wish it may not be ow-'ing to *you*, that your mutual dislikes 'to each other do not subside; for it is 'my earnest hope, that in time you may 'see each other, without exciting the 'fears of a wife and a sister for the con-'sequence. Not that I should wish 'you to yield in points that truly con-'cerned your honour: no, Sir; I would 'be as delicate in such, as you your-'self: *more* delicate, I will venture to 'say, because more *uniformly* so. How 'vain, how contemptible, is that pride, 'which shews itself in standing upon 'diminutive observances; and gives 'up, and makes a jest of, the most im-'portant duties!

'This article being considered as I 'wish, all the rest will be easy. Were 'I to accept of the handsome separate 'provision you seem to intend me; added 'to the considerable sums arisen from 'my grandfather's estate since his death, '(more considerable than perhaps you 'may suppose from your offer;) I should 'think it my duty to lay up for the fa-'mily good, and for unforeseen events, 'out of it: for, as to my donations, 'I would generally confine myself in 'them to the tenth of my income, be 'it what it would. I aim at no glare 'in what I do of that sort. All I wish 'for, is the power of relieving the 'lame, the blind, the sick, and the in-'dustrious poor, and those whom ac-'cident has made so, or sudden dis-'tress reduced. The common or bred 'beggars I leave to others, and to the 'publick provision. They cannot be 'lower: perhaps they wish not to be 'higher: and, not able to do for 'every-one, I aim not at works of su-'pererogation. Two hundred pounds 'a year would do all I wish to do 'of the separate sort: for all above I 'would content myself to ask you; 'except, mistrusting your own œcono-'my, you would give up my manage-'ment and keeping, in order to pro-'vide for future contingencies, a larger 'portion; for which, as your steward, 'I would regularly account.

'As to cloaths, I have particularly 'two suits, which, having been only 'in a manner tried on, would answer 'for any present occasion. Jewels I 'have of my grandmother's, which 'want only new setting: another set I 'have, which on particular days I used 'to wear. Although these are not 'sent me, I have no doubt, being mere-'ly personals, but they will, when I 'send for them in *another name*: till 'when I should not chuse to wear 'any.

'As

'As to your complaints of my diffi-
'dences, and the like, I appeal to your
'own heart, if it be poſſible for you
'to make my caſe your own for one
'moment, and to retroſpect ſome parts
'of your behaviour, words, and ac-
'tions, whether I am not rather to be
'juſtified than cenſured: and whether,
'of all men in the world, *avowing*
'*what you avow*, you ought not to
'think ſo. If you do not, let me ad-
'moniſh you, Sir, from the very great
'*miſmatch*, that then muſt appear to be
'in our minds, never to ſeek, nor ſo
'much as wiſh, to bring about the
'*moſt intimate* union of intereſts be-
'tween yourſelf and

'CLARISSA HARLOWE.

'MAY 20.'

The original of this charming paper, as Dorcas tells me, was torn almoſt in two. In one of her pets, I ſuppoſe! What buſineſs have the ſex, whoſe principal glory is meekneſs, and patience, and reſignation, to be in a paſſion I trow?—Will not ſhe who allows herſelf ſuch liberties as a maiden, take greater when married?

And a *wife* to be in a paſſion!—Let me tell the ladies it is an impudent thing, begging their pardon, and as *imprudent* as impudent, for a *wife* to be in a paſſion, if ſhe mean not eternal ſeparation, or wicked defiance by it: for is it not rejecting at once all that expoſtulatory meekneſs, and gentle reaſoning, mingled with ſighs as gentle, and graced with bent knees, ſupplicating hands, and eyes lifted up to your imperial countenance, juſt running over, that ſhould make a reconciliation ſpeedy, and as laſting as ſpeedy? Even ſuppoſe the huſband is in the wrong, will not his being ſo give the greater force to her expoſtulation?

Now I think of it, a man *ſhould* be in the wrong now-and-then, to make his wife ſhine. Miſs Howe tells my charmer, that adverſity is *her* ſhining-time. 'Tis a generous thing in a man, to make his wife ſhine at his own expence: to give her leave to triumph over him by patient reaſoning: for were he to be *too imperial* to acknowledge his fault *on the ſpot*, ſhe will find the benefit of her duty and ſubmiſſion *in future*, and in the high opinion he will conceive of her prudence and obligingneſs—And ſo, by degrees, ſhe will become her maſter's maſter.

But for a wife to come up with a kemboed arm, the other hand thrown out, perhaps with a pointing finger—'Look ye here, Sir!—Take notice!—'If *you* are wrong, *I'll* be wrong!—If 'you are in a paſſion, *I'll* be in a paſſion! 'Rebuff for rebuff, Sir!—If *you* fly, 'I'll tear!—If *you* ſwear, *I'll* curſe!—'And the ſame room, and the ſame 'bed, ſhall not hold us, Sir!—For, 'remember, I am married, Sir!—I 'am a wife, Sir!—You can't help 'yourſelf, Sir!—Your honour, as well 'as your peace, is in my keeping! 'And, if you like not this treatment, 'you may have worſe, Sir!'

Ah! Jack! Jack! What man, who has obſerved theſe things, either *implied*, or *expreſſed*, in *other* families, would wiſh to be an huſband!

Dorcas found this paper in one of the drawers of her lady's dreſſing-table. She was re-peruſing it, as ſhe ſuppoſes, when the honeſt wench carried my meſſage to deſire her to favour me at the tea-table; for ſhe ſaw her pop a paper into the drawer as ſhe came in; and there, on her miſtreſs's going to meet me in the dining-room, ſhe found it; and to be this.

But I had better not to have had a copy of it, as far as I know: for, determined as I was before upon my operations, it inſtantly turned all my reſolutions in her favour. Yet I would give ſomething to be convinced, that ſhe did not pop it into her drawer before the wench, in order for me to ſee it; and perhaps (if I were to take notice of it) to diſcover whether Dorcas, according to Miſs Howe's advice, were moſt *my* friend, or *hers*.

The very ſuſpicion of this will do her no good: for I cannot bear to be *artfully dealt with*. People love to enjoy their own peculiar talents in *monopoly*, as I may ſay. I am aware, that it will ſtrengthen thy arguments againſt me in her behalf. But I know every tittle thou canſt ſay upon it. Spare therefore thy wambling nonſenſe, I deſire thee; and leave this ſweet excellence and me to our fate: that will determine *for* us, as it ſhall pleaſe itſelf: for as Cowley ſays—

'An unſeen hand makes all our moves:
'And ſome are great, and ſome are ſmall;
'Some climb to good, ſome from good for-
'tune fall:

'Some

'Some wise men, and some fools we call:
'Figures, alas! of speech!—For destiny plays
'us all.'

But, after all, I am sorry, *almost* sorry, (for how shall I do to be *quite* sorry, when it is not *given* to me to be so?) that I cannot, until I have made further trials, resolve upon wedlock.

I have just read over again this intended answer to my proposals: and how I adore her for it!

But yet; another *yet!*—She has not given it or sent it to me.—It is not therefore *her* answer. It is not written *for* me, though to me.

Nay, she has not *intended* to send it to me: she has even torn it, perhaps with indignation, as thinking it too *good* for me. By this action she absolutely retracts it. Why then does my foolish fondness seek to establish for her the same merit in my heart, as if she avowed it? Pr'ythee, dear Belford, once more, leave us to our fate; and do not thou interpose with thy nonsense, to weaken a spirit already too squeamish, and strengthen a conscience that has declared itself of her party.

Then again, 'Remember thy recent 'discoveries, Lovelace! Remember her 'indifference, attended with all the ap-'pearance of contempt and hatred. 'View her, even *now*, wrapt up in re-'serve and mystery; meditating plots, 'as far as thou knowest, against the 'sovereignty thou hast, by right of con-'quest, obtained over her. Remem-'ber, in short, all thou hast *threatened* 'to remember against this insolent 'beauty, who is a rebel to the power 'she has listed under.'

'But yet, how dost thou propose to 'subdue thy sweet enemy!'—Abhorred be *force*, be the *necessity* of force, if that can be avoided! There is no triumph in *force*—No conquest over the will—No prevailing by gentle degrees, over the gentle passions!—*Force* is the devil!'

My cursed character, as I have often said, was against me at setting-out—Yet is she not a *woman?* Cannot I find one yielding or but half-yielding moment, if she do not absolutely hate me?

But with what can I tempt her?—RICHES she was born to, and despises, knowing what they are. JEWELS and ornaments, to a mind so much a jewel, and so richly set, her worthy conscious-ness will not let her value. LOVE—If she be susceptible of love, it seems to be so much under the direction of prudence, that one unguarded moment, I fear, cannot be reasonably hoped for: and so much VIGILANCE, so much apprehensiveness, that her fears are ever aforehand with her dangers. Then her LOVE OF VIRTUE seems to be *principle*, native principle, or, if *not* native, so deeply rooted, that it's fibres have struck into her heart, and, as she grew up, so blended and twisted themselves with the strings of life, that I doubt there is no separating of the one without cutting the others asunder.

What then can be done to make such a matchless creature get over her first tests, in order to put her to the grand proof, *whether once overcome, she will not be always overcome?*

Our mother and her nymphs say, I am a perfect Craven, and no Lovelace: and so I think. But this is no simpering, smiling charmer, as I have found others to be, when I have touched upon affecting subjects at a distance; as once or twice I have tried to her, the mother introducing them (to make sex palliate the freedom to sex) when only we three together. She is above the affectation of not seeming to understand you. She shews by her displeasure, and a fierceness not natural to her eye, that she judges of an impure heart by an impure mouth, and darts dead at once even the embryo hopes of an encroaching lover, however distantly insinuated, before the meaning hint can dawn into *double entendre*.

By my faith, Jack, as I sit gazing upon her, my whole soul in my eyes, contemplating her perfections, and thinking, when I have seen her easy and serene, what would be her thoughts, did *she* know my heart as well as *I* know it; when I behold her disturbed and jealous, and think of the *justness* of her apprehensions, and that she cannot fear so much, as there is *room* for her to fear; my heart often misgives me.

'And must,' think I, 'O creature so 'divinely excellent, and so beloved of 'my soul, those arms, those encircling 'arms, that would make a monarch 'happy, be used to repel brutal force; 'all

'all their ſtrength, unavailingly perhaps, exerted to repel it, and to defend a perſon ſo delicately framed? Can violence enter into the heart of a wretch, who might entitle himſelf to all her willing, yet virtuous love, and make the bleſſings he aſpireth after, her *duty* to confer?—Be gone, villain-purpoſes! Sink ye all to the hell that could only inſpire ye!' And I am then ready to throw myſelf at her feet, to confeſs my villainous deſigns, to avow my repentance, and put it out of my power to act unworthily by ſuch an excellence.

How then comes it, that all theſe compaſſionate, and, as ſome would call them, *honeſt* ſenſibilities go off?—Why, Miſs Howe will tell thee: ſhe ſays, I am the *devil*.—By my conſcience, I think he has at preſent a great ſhare in me.

There's ingenuouſneſs!—How I lay myſelf open to thee!—But ſeeſt thou not, that the more I ſay againſt myſelf, the leſs room there is for thee to take me to taſk?—O Belford, Belford! I cannot, cannot, (at leaſt *at preſent*) I cannot marry.

Then her family, my bitter enemies—To ſuppoſe to them, or if I do not, to make her *as* unhappy as ſhe can be from my *attempts*.

Then does ſhe not love them too much, me too little?

She now ſeems to deſpiſe me: Miſs Howe declares, that ſhe really does deſpiſe me. To be *deſpiſed by a* WIFE—What a thought is that!—To be *excelled by a* WIFE too, in every part of praiſe-worthy knowledge!—To *take leſſons*, to *take inſtructions*, from a WIFE!—*More* than deſpiſe me, ſhe herſelf has taken time to conſider whether ſhe does not *hate* me:—'*I hate you*, 'Lovelace, *with my whole heart!*' ſaid ſhe to me but yeſterday. '*My ſoul is* '*above thee, man!—Urge me not to* '*tell thee, how ſincerely I think my* '*ſoul above thee!*'—How poor indeed was I then, even in my own heart!—So *viſible* a ſuperiority, to ſo proud a ſpirit as mine!—And *here* from below, from BELOW indeed! from theſe *women!* I am ſo goaded on—

Yet 'tis poor too, to think myſelf a machine in the hands of ſuch wretches.—I am *no* machine.—Lovelace, thou art baſe to thyſelf, but to *ſuppoſe* thyſelf a machine.

But having gone thus far, I ſhould be unhappy, if after marriage, in the petulance of ill humour, I had it to reproach myſelf, that I did not try her to the utmoſt. And yet I don't know how it is, but this lady, the moment I come into her preſence, half-aſſimilates me to her own virtue.—Once or twice (to ſay nothing of her triumph over me on Sunday night) I was prevailed upon to fluſter myſelf, with an intention to make ſome advances, which, if obliged to recede, I might lay upon raiſed ſpirits: but the inſtant I beheld her, I was ſoberized into awe and reverence; and the majeſty of her even *viſible* purity firſt damped, and then extinguiſhed, my *double* flame.

What a ſurprizingly powerful effect, ſo much and ſo long in my power *ſhe!* ſo inſtigated by ſome of her own ſex, and ſo ſtimulated by paſſion, *I!*—How can this be accounted for, in a Lovelace!

But, what a heap of ſtuff have I written!—How have I been run away with!—By what?—Canſt thou ſay, by what?—O thou lurking varleteſs CONSCIENCE!—Is it thou, that haſt thus made me of party againſt myſelf?—How cameſt thou in?—In what diſguiſe, thou egregious haunter of my more agreeable hours?—Stand *thou*, with *fate*, but neuter in this controverſy; and, if I cannot do credit to human nature, and to the female ſex, by bringing down ſuch an angel as this to claſs with and adorn it, (for adorn it ſhe does in her very foibles) then I am all yours, and never will reſiſt you more.

Here I aroſe. I ſhook myſelf. The window was open. Away the troubleſome boſom-viſitor, the intruder, is flown.—I ſee it yet!—I ſee it yet!—And now it leſſens to my aching eye!—And now the cleft air is cloſed after it, and it is out of ſight!—And once more I am

ROBERT LOVELACE.

LETTER XXXVII.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

TUESDAY, MAY 23.

WELL did I, and but juſt in time conclude to have done with Mrs. Fretchville and the houſe: for

for here Mennell has declared, that he cannot in conſcience and honour go any farther.—He would not for the world be acceſſary to the deceiving of ſuch a lady!—I was a fool to let either you or him ſee her; for ever *ſince* ye have both had ſcruples, which neither would have had, were a *woman* to have been in the queſtion.

Well, I can't help it!

Mennell has, however, though with ſome reluctance, conſented to write me a letter, provided I will allow it to be the laſt ſtep he ſhall take in this affair.

I preſumed, I told him, that if I could cauſe Mrs. Fretchville's *woman* to ſupply *his* place, he would have no objection to that.

'*None*,' he ſays—'*But is it not* '*pity*—'

A pitiful fellow! Such a ridiculous kind of pity *his*, as thoſe ſilly ſouls have, who would not kill an innocent chicken for the world; but when killed to their hands, are always the moſt greedy devourers of it.

Now this letter gives the ſervant the ſmall-pox: and ſhe has given it to her unhappy vapouriſh lady. Vapouriſh people are perpetual ſubjects for diſeaſes to work upon. *Name* but the malady, and it is *theirs* in a moment. *Ever* fitted for inoculation.—The phyſical tribe's milch-cows.—A vapouriſh or ſplenetick patient is a fiddle for the doctors; and they are eternally playing upon it. Sweet muſick does it make them. All their difficulty, except a caſe extraordinary happens, (as poor Mrs. Fretchville's, who has *realized* her apprehenſions) is but to hold their countenance, while their patient is drawing up a bill of indictment againſt himſelf—and when they have heard it, proceed to *puniſh*:—the right word for *preſcribe*. Why ſhould they not, when the criminal has confeſſed his guilt?—And *puniſh* they generally do with a vengeance.

Yet, ſilly toads too, now I think of it. For why, when they know they cannot do good, may they not as well endeavour to gratify, as to nauſeate, the patient's palate?

Were I a phyſician, I'd get all the trade to myſelf: for Malmſey, and Cyprus, and the generous product of the Cape, a little diſguiſed, ſhould be my principal doſes: as theſe would create new ſpirits, how would the revived patient covet the phyſick, and adore the doctor!

Give all the paraders of the faculty whom thou knoweſt, this hint.—There could but one inconvenience ariſe from it. The APOTHECARIES would find their medicines coſt them *ſomething*: but the demand for quantities would anſwer that; ſince the honeſt NURSE would be the patient's taſter; perpetually requiring repetitions of the laſt cordial julap.

Well, but to the letter—Yet what need of further explanation after the hints in my former? The widow can't be removed; and that's enough: and Mennell's work is over; and his conſcience left to plague him for his own ſins, and not another man's: and, very poſſibly, plague enough will give him for thoſe.

This letter is directed, '*To Robert* '*Lovelace, Eſq. or, in his abſence, To* '*his lady*.' She had refuſed dining with me, or ſeeing me: and I was out when it came. She opened it: ſo is my lady by her own conſent, proud and ſaucy as ſhe is.

I am glad at my heart that it came before we entirely make up. She would elſe perhaps have concluded it to be *contrived for a delay*: and now, moreover, we can accommodate our old and new quarrels together; and that's contrivance, you know. But how is her dear haughty heart humbled to what it was when I knew her firſt, that ſhe can apprehend any delays from me; and have nothing to do but to vex at them!

I came in to dinner. She ſent me down the letter, deſiring my excuſe for opening it.—Did it before ſhe was aware. Lady-pride, Belford!—Recollection, then retrogradation!

I requeſted to ſee her upon it that moment.—But ſhe deſires to ſuſpend our interview till morning. I will bring her to own, before I have done with her, that ſhe can't ſee me too often.

My impatience was ſo great, on an occaſion ſo *unexpected*, that I could not help writing to tell her, how much vexed I was at the accident: but that it need not delay my happy day, as that did not depend upon the houſe. [*She knew that before, ſhe'll think; and ſo did I:*] and as Mrs. Fretchville, by Mr. Mennell, ſo handſomely expreſſed her

her concern upon it, and her wishes, that it could suit us to bear with the unavoidable delay, I hoped, that going down to the Lawn for two or three of the summer-months, when I was made the happiest of men, would be favourable to all round.

The dear creature takes this incident to heart, I believe: she has sent word to my repeated requeſt to see her notwithstanding her denial, that she cannot till the morning. It shall be then at six o'clock, if I please!

To be sure I *do* please!

Can see her but once a day now, Jack!

Did I tell thee, that I wrote a letter to my cousin Montague, wondering that I heard not from Lord M. as the subject was so very interesting! In it, I acquainted her with the house I was about taking; and with Mrs. Fretchville's vapourish delays.

I was very loth to engage my own family, either man or woman, in this affair; but I must take my measures securely: and already they all think as bad of me as they well can. You observe by my Lord M.'s letter to yourself, that the well-manner'd peer is afraid I should play this admirable creature one of my *usual dog's tricks*.

I have received just now an answer from Charlotte.

Charlotte sn't well. A stomach disorder!

No wonder a girl's stomach should plague her. A single woman; that's it. When she has a man to plague, it will have something besides itself to prey upon. Knowest thou not moreover, that man is the woman's sun; woman, is the man's earth? — How dreary, how desolate, the earth, that the sun shines not upon!

Poor Charlotte! But I *heard* she was not well: that encouraged me to write to her; and to express myself a little concerned, that she had not of her own accord thought of a visit in town to my charmer.

Here follows a copy of her letter. Thou wilt see by it, that every little monkey is to catechise *me*. They all depend upon my good-nature.

'M. HALL, MAY 22.

'DEAR COUSIN,

'WE have been in daily hope for a 'long time, I must call it, of 'hearing that the happy knot was tied. 'My lord has been very much out of 'order: and yet nothing would serve 'him, but he would himself write an 'answer to your letter. It was the only 'opportunity he should ever have, perhaps, to throw in a little good advice 'to you, with the hope of it's being of 'any signification; and he has been 'several hours in a day, as his gout 'would let him, busied in it. It wants 'now only his last revisal. He hopes it 'will have the greater weight with you, 'if it appear all in his own hand-'writing.

'Indeed, Mr. Lovelace, his worthy 'heart is wrapt up in you. I wish you 'loved yourself but half as well. But 'I believe too, that if all the family 'loved you less, you would love your-'self more.

'His lordship has been very busy, at 'the times he could not write, in con-'sulting Pritchard about those estates, 'which he proposes to transfer to you 'on the happy occasion, that he may 'answer your letter in the most accept-'able manner; and shew, by effects, 'how kindly he takes your invitation. 'I assure you, he is mighty proud 'of it.

'As for myself, I am not at all well, 'and have not been for some weeks 'past, with my old stomach-disorder. 'I had certainly else before now have 'done myself the honour you wonder 'I have *not* done myself. Lady Betty, 'who would have accompanied me, '(for we had laid it all out) has been 'exceedingly busy in her law-affair; 'her antagonist, who is actually on the 'spot, having been making proposals 'for an accommodation. But you may 'assure yourself, that when our dear 'relation-elect shall be entered upon 'the new habitation you tell me of, 'we will do ourselves the honour of 'visiting her; and if any delay arises 'from the dear lady's want of courage, '(which, considering her man, let me 'tell you, may very well be) we will 'endeavour to inspire her with it, and 'be sponsors for you;—for, cousin, I 'believe you have need to be christened 'over again before you are entitled 'to so great a blessing. What think 'you?

'Just now, my lord tells me, he will 'dispatch a man on purpose with his 'letter to-morrow: so I needed not to 'have written. But now I have, let it

'go; and by Empſon, who ſets out directly on his return to town.

'My beſt compliments, and ſiſter's, 'to the moſt deſerving lady in the 'world, [you will need no other direction to the perſon meant] conclude 'me *your affectionate couſin and ſervant*,

'CHARL. MONTAGUE.'

'Thou ſeeſt how ſeaſonably this letter comes. I hope my lord will write nothing but what I may ſhew to my beloved. I have actually ſent her up this letter of Charlotte's; and hope for happy effects from it.

R. L.

The lady, in her next letter, gives Miſs Howe an account of what has paſſed between Mr. Lovelace and herſelf. She reſents his behaviour with her uſual dignity: but when ſhe comes to mention Mr. Mennell's letter, ſhe re-urges Miſs Howe to perfect her ſcheme for her deliverance; being reſolved to leave him. But, dating again, on his ſending up to her Miſs Montague's letter, ſhe alters her mind, and deſires her to ſuſpend for the preſent her application to Mrs. Townſend.

'I HAD begun,' *ſays ſhe*, 'to ſuſpect 'all he had ſaid of Mrs. Fretchville 'and her houſe; and even Mr. Mennell 'himſelf, though ſo well-appearing a 'man. But now that I find Mr. Love'lace had apprized his relations of his 'intention to take it, and had engaged 'ſome of the ladies to viſit me there; 'I could hardly forbear blaming myſelf 'for cenſuring him as capable of ſo 'vile an impoſture. But may he not 'thank himſelf for acting ſo very un'accountably, and taking ſuch need'leſsly-awry ſteps, as he has done; 'embarraſſing, as I told him, his own 'meanings, if they were good?'

LETTER XXXVIII.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 24.

He gives his friend an account of their interview that morning; and of the happy effects of his couſin Montague's letter in his favour. Her reſerves, however, he tells him, are not abſolutely baniſhed. But this he imputes to form.

IT is *not* in the power of woman, *ſays he*, to be altogether ſincere on theſe occaſions. But why?—Do they think it ſo great a diſgrace to be found out to be really what they *are*?

I regretted the illneſs of Mrs. Fretchville; as the intention I had to fix her dear ſelf in the houſe before the happy knot was tied, would have ſet her in that independence in *appearance*, as well as *fact*, which was neceſſary to ſhew to all the world, that her choice was free; and as the ladies of my family would have been proud to make their court to her there; while the ſettlements and our equipages were preparing. But on any other account, there was no great matter in it; ſince, when my happy day was over, we could, with ſo much convenience, go down to the Lawn, to my Lord M.'s, and to Lady Sarah or Lady Betty's, in turn; which would give full time to provide ourſelves with ſervants, and other accommodations.

How ſweetly the charmer liſtened!

I aſked her, If ſhe had had the ſmall-pox?

'Ten thouſand pounds the worſe in 'my eſtimation,' thought I, 'if ſhe 'has not; for not one of her charming 'graces can I diſpenſe with.'

'Twas always a doubtful point with her mother and Mrs. Norton, ſhe owned. But although ſhe was not afraid of it, ſhe choſe not unneceſſarily to ruſh into places where it was.

'*Right*,' *thought I*—Elſe, I ſaid, it would not have been amiſs for her to ſee the houſe before ſhe went into the country; for if *ſhe* liked it not, I was not obliged to have it.

She aſked, If ſhe might take a copy of Miſs Montague's letter?

I ſaid, ſhe might keep the letter itſelf, and ſend it to Miſs Howe, if ſhe pleaſed; for *that*, I ſuppoſe, was her intention.

She bowed her head to me.

There, Jack! I ſhall have her curtſey to me by-and-by, I queſtion not. What a-devil had I to do, to terrify the ſweet creature by my termagant projects!—Yet it was not amiſs, I believe, to make her afraid of me. She *ſays*, I am an unpolite

polite man—And every polite inſtance from ſuch a one, is deemed a favour.

Talking of the ſettlements, I told her, I had rather that Pritchard (mentioned by my couſin Charlotte) had not been conſulted on this occaſion. Pritchard, indeed, was a very honeſt man; and had been for a generation in the family; and knew the eſtates, and the condition of them, better than either my lord or myſelf: but Pritchard, like other old men, was diffident and ſlow; and valued himſelf upon his ſkill as a draughts-man; and for the ſake of that paltry reputation, muſt have all his forms preſerved, were an imperial crown to depend upon his diſpatch.

I kiſſed her unrepulſing hand no leſs than five times during this converſation. Lord, Jack, how my generous heart ran over!—She was quite obliging at parting.—She in a manner aſked me *leave* to retire; to re-peruſe Charlotte's letter.—I think ſhe bent her knees to me; but I won't be ſure.—How happy might we have both been long ago, had the dear creature been always as complaiſant to me! For I do love reſpect, and, whether I deſerve it or not, always had it, till I knew this proud beauty.

And now, Belford, are we in a train, or the deuce is in it. Every fortified town has it's ſtrong and it's weak place. I had carried on my attacks againſt the impregnable parts. I have no doubt but I ſhall either *ſhine* or *ſmuggle* her out of her cloak, ſince ſhe and Miſs Howe have intended to employ a ſmuggler againſt *me*.—All we wait for now is my lord's letter.

But I had like to have *forgot* to tell thee, that we have been not a little alarmed, by ſome enquiries that have been made after me and my beloved, by a man of good appearance; who yeſterday procured a tradeſman in the neighbourhood to ſend for Dorcas: of whom he aſked ſeveral queſtions relating to us; and particularly (as we boarded and lodged in one houſe) whether we were married?

This has given my beloved great uneaſineſs. And I could not help obſerving upon it, to her, *how right a thing it was, that we had given out below, that we were married*. The enquiry, moſt probably, I ſaid, was from her brother's quarter; and now perhaps that our marriage was owned, we ſhould hear no more of his machinations. The perſon, it ſeems, was curious to know the *day* that the ceremony was performed. But Dorcas refuſed to give him any other particulars, than that we *were* married; and ſhe was the more reſerved, as he declined to tell her the motives of his enquiry.

LETTER XXXIX.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

MAY 24.

THE devil take this uncle of mine! He has at laſt ſent me a letter, which I cannot ſhew, without expoſing the head of our family for a fool. A confounded parcel of pop-guns has he let off upon me. I was in hopes he had exhauſted his whole ſtock of this ſort, in his letter to you.—To keep it back, to delay ſending it, till he had recollected all this *farrago* of nonſenſe—Confound his *wiſdom of nations*, if ſo much of it is to be ſcraped together, in diſgrace of itſelf, to make one egregious ſimpleton!—But I am glad I am fortified with this piece of flagrant folly, however; ſince, in all human affairs, the *convenient* and *inconvenient*, the *good* and the *bad*, are ſo mingled, that there is no having the one without the other.

I have already offered the bill incloſed in it to my beloved; and read to her part of the letter. But ſhe refuſed the bill: and as I am in caſh myſelf, I ſhall return it. She ſeemed very deſirous to peruſe the whole letter. And when I told her, that were it not for expoſing the writer, I would oblige her, ſhe ſaid, It would not be expoſing his lordſhip to ſhew it to her; and that ſhe always preferred the heart to the head. I knew her meaning; but did not thank her for it.

All that makes for me in it, I will tranſcribe for her—Yet hang it, ſhe ſhall have the letter, and my ſoul with it, for one conſenting kiſs.

* *

SHE has got the letter from me, without the reward. Deuce take me, if I had the courage to propoſe the condition. A new character this of baſhfulneſs in thy friend. I ſee, *that a truly modeſt woman may make even a confident man*

keep his diſtance. By my ſoul, Belford, I believe, that nine women in ten, who fall, fall either *from their own vanity*, or *levity*, or for want of *circumſpection*, and *proper reſerves*.

* *

I DID intend to take my reward on her returning a letter ſo favourable to us both. But ſhe ſent it to me, ſealed up, by Dorcas. I might have thought that there were two or three hints in it, that ſhe would be too nice immediately to appear to. I ſend it to thee; and here will ſtop, to give thee time to read it. Return it as ſoon as thou haſt peruſed it.

LETTER XL.

LORD M. TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

TUESDAY, MAY 23.

IT is a long lane that has no turning—Do not deſpiſe me for my proverbs—You know I was always fond of them; and if you had been ſo too, it would have been the better for you, let me tell you. I dare ſwear, the fine lady you are ſo likely to be ſoon happy with, will be far from deſpiſing them; for I am told, that ſhe writes well, and that all her letters are full of ſentences. God convert you! for nobody but He and this lady can.

I have no manner of doubt now but that you will marry, as your father, and all your anceſtors, did before you: elſe you would have had no title to be my heir; nor can your deſcendants have any title to be yours, unleſs they are legitimate; that's worth your remembrance, Sir!—*No man is always a fool, every man is ſometimes*.—But your follies, I hope, are now at an end.

I know, you have vowed revenge againſt this fine lady's family: but no more of that, now. You muſt look upon them all as your relations; and forgive, and forget. And when they ſee you make a good huſband and a good father, [Which God ſend, for all our ſakes!] they will wonder at their nonſenſical antipathy, and beg your pardon: but while they think you a vile fellow, and a rake, how can they either love you, or excuſe their daughter?

And methinks I could wiſh to give a word of comfort to the lady, who, doubtleſs, muſt be under great fears, how ſhe ſhall be able to hold-in ſuch a wild creature, as you have hitherto been. I would hint to her, that by ſtrong arguments, and gentle words, ſhe may do any-thing with you; for though you are apt to be hot, gentle words will cool you, and bring you into the temper that is neceſſary for your cure.

Would to God, *my* poor lady, your aunt, who is dead and gone, had been a proper patient for the ſame remedy! God reſt her ſoul! No reflections upon her memory! *Worth is beſt known by want!* I know *hers* now; and if I had went firſt, ſhe would by this time have known *mine*.

There is great wiſdom in that ſaying, *God ſend me a friend, that may tell me of my faults: if not, an enemy, and he will*. Not that I am your enemy; and that you well know. *The more noble any one is, the more humble*; ſo bear with me, if you would be thought noble.—Am I not your uncle? And do I not deſign to be better to you than your father could be? Nay, I will be your father too, when the happy day comes; ſince you deſire it: and pray make my compliments to my dear niece; and tell her, I wonder much that ſhe has ſo long deferred your happineſs.

Pray let her know as that I will preſent HER (not *you*) either my Lancaſhire ſeat, or *The Lawn* in Hertfordſhire, and ſettle upon her a thouſand pounds a year penny-rents; to ſhew her, that we are not a family to take baſe advantages: and you may have writings drawn, and ſettle as you will.—Honeſt Pritchard has the rent-roll of both theſe eſtates; and as he has been a good old ſervant, I recommend him to your lady's favour. I have already conſulted him: he will tell you what is beſt for you, and moſt pleaſing to me.

I am ſtill very bad with my gout, but will come in a litter, as ſoon as the day is fixed: it would be the joy of my heart to join your hands. And, let me tell you, if you do not make the beſt of huſbands to ſo good a young lady, and one who has had ſo much courage for your ſake, I will renounce you; and ſettle all I can upon her and hers by you, and leave you out of the queſtion.

If any-thing be wanting for your further ſecurity, I am ready to give it; though

though you know, that my word has always been looked upon as my bond. And when the Harlowes know all this, let us see whether they are able to blush, and take shame to themselves.

Lady Sarah and Lady Betty want only to know the day, to make all the country round them blaze, and all their tenants mad. And, if any-one of mine be sober upon the occasion, Pritchard shall eject him. And, on the birth of the first child, if a son, I will do something more for you, and repeat all our rejoicings.

I ought indeed to have written sooner. But I knew, that if you thought me long, and were in haste as to your nuptials, you would write and tell me so. But my gout was very troublesome: and I am but a slow writer, you know, at best: for composing is a thing, that though formerly I was very ready at it, (as my Lord Lexington used to say;) yet having left it off a great while, I am not so now. And I chose, on this occasion, to write all out of my own head and memory; and to give you my best advice; for I may never have such an opportunity again. You have had [God mend you!] a strange way of turning your back upon all I have said: this once, I hope, you will be more attentive to the advice I give you for your own good.

I had still another end; nay, two other ends.

The one was, That now you are upon the borders of wedlock, as I may say, and *all your wild oats will be sown*, I would give you some instructions as to your publick as well as private behaviour in life; which, intending you so much good as I do, you ought to hear; and perhaps would never have listened to, on any less extraordinary occasion.

The second is, That your dear lady-elect (who is, it seems, herself so fine and so sententious a writer) will see by this, that it is not our faults, nor for want of the best advice, that you was not a better man than you have hitherto been.

And now, in few words, for the conduct I would wish you to follow in publick, as well as in private, if you would think me worthy of advising.—It shall be short; so be not uneasy.

As to the *private* life: Love your lady as she deserves. *Let your actions praise you.* Be a good husband; and so give the lie to all your enemies; and make them ashamed of their scandals. And let us have pride in saying, that Miss Harlowe has not done either herself or family any discredit by coming among us. Do this; and I, and Lady Sarah and Lady Betty, will love you for ever.

As to your *publick* conduct—This as follows is what I could wish: but I reckon your lady's wisdom will put us both right—No disparagement, Sir; since with all your wit, you have not hitherto shewn much wisdom, you know.

Get into parliament as soon as you can: for you have *talons* to make a great figure there. Who so proper to assist in making new holding laws, as those whom no law in being could hold?

Then, for so long as you will give attendance in St. Stephen's Chapel—It's being called a chapel, I hope, will not *disgust* you: I am sure I have known many a riot there:—a speaker has a hard time of it! But we *peers* have more decorum—But what was I going to say?—I must go back.

For so long as you will give your attendance in parliament, for so long will you be out of mischief; out of *private* mischief, at least: and may St. Stephen's fate be yours, if you wilfully do *publick* mischief!

When a new election comes, you will have two or three boroughs, you know, to chuse out of:—but if you stay till then, I had rather you were for the shire.

You will have interest enough, I am sure; and being so handsome a man, the women will *make* their husbands vote for you.

I shall long to read your speeches. I expect you will speak, if occasion offer, the very first day. You want no courage; and think highly enough of yourself, and lowly enough of every-body else, to speak on all occasions.

As to the methods of the house, you have spirit enough, I fear, to be too much above them: take care of that.—I don't so much fear your want of good-manners. To *men*, you want no decency, if they don't provoke you: as to that, I wish you would only learn to be as patient of contradiction from *others*, as you would have other people be to *you*.

Although

Although I would not have you to be a courtier; neither would I have you to be a malcontent. I remember *(for I have it down)* what my old friend Archibald Hutcheſon ſaid; and it was a very good ſaying—(to Mr. Secretary Craggs, I think, it was)—'I look upon 'an adminiſtration, as entitled to every 'vote, I can with good conſcience give 'it; for a Houſe of Commons ſhould 'not needleſsly put drags upon the 'wheels of government: and, when I 'have *not* given it my vote, it was with 'regret: and for my country's ſake, I 'wiſhed with all my heart, the mea'ſure had been ſuch as I could have 'approved.'

And another ſaying he had, which was this; 'Neither can an oppoſition, 'neither can a miniſtry, be always 'wrong. To be a plumb man there'fore with either, is an infallible 'mark, that that man muſt mean more 'and worſe than he will own he does 'mean.'

Are theſe ſayings bad, Sir? Are they to be deſpiſed?—Well then, why ſhould I be deſpiſed for remembering them, and quoting them, as I love to do? Let me tell you, if you loved my company more than you do, you would not be the worſe for it. I may ſay ſo without any vanity; ſince it is *other men's* wiſdom, and not *my own*, that I am ſo fond of.

But to add a word or two more on this occaſion; and I may never have ſuch another; for you *muſt* read this through—*Love honeſt men, and herd with them, in the houſe and out of the houſe*; by whatever names they be dignified or diſtinguiſhed: *Keep good men company, and you ſhall be of their number.* But did I, or did I not, write this before?—Writing at ſo many different times, and ſuch a quantity, one may forget.

You may come in for the title when I am dead and gone—God help me!—So I would have you keep an equilibrium. If once you get the name of being a fine ſpeaker, you may have anything: and, to be ſure, you have naturally a good deal of elocution; a tongue that would delude an angel, as the women ſay—To their ſorrow, ſome of them, poor creatures!—A leading man in the Houſe of Commons is a very important character; becauſe that houſe has the giving of money: and *money makes the mare to go*; aye, and queens and kings too, ſometimes, to go in a manner very different from what they might otherwiſe chuſe to go, let me tell you.

However, methinks, I would not have you take a place neither—It will double your value, and your intereſt, if it be believed, that you will not: for, as you will then ſtand in no man's way, you will have no envy; but pure ſterling reſpect; and both ſides will court you.

For your part, you will not want a place, as ſome others do, to piece up their broken fortunes. If you can now live reputably upon two thouſand pounds a year, it will be hard if you cannot hereafter live upon ſeven or eight—Leſs you will not have, if you oblige me; as now by marrying ſo fine a lady, very much you will—And all this, over and above Lady Betty's and Lady Sarah's favours! What, in the name of wonder, could poſſibly poſſeſs the proud Harlowes!—That ſon, that ſon of theirs!—But, for his dear ſiſter's ſake, I will ſay no more of him.

I never was offered a place myſelf: and the only one I would have taken, had I been offered it, was *maſter of the buckhounds*; for I loved hunting when I was young; and it carries a good ſound with it for us who live in the country. Often have I thought of that excellent old adage; *He that eats the king's gooſe, ſhall be choaked with his feathers.* I wiſh to the Lord, this was thoroughly conſidered by place-hunters! It would be better for them, and for their poor families.

I could ſay a great deal more, and all equally to the purpoſe. But really I am tired; and ſo I doubt are you. And beſides, I would reſerve ſomething for converſation.

My nieces Montague, and Lady Sarah, and Lady Betty, join in compliments to my niece that is to be. If ſhe would chuſe to have the knot tied among us, pray tell her that we ſhall ſee it *ſecurely done*: and we will make all the country ring and blaze for a week together. But ſo I believe I ſaid before.

If any-thing farther may be needful toward promoting your reciprocal felicity, let me know it; and how you order about the day; and all that. The incloſed bill is very much at your ſervice.

vice. 'Tis payable at ſight, as whatever elſe you may have occaſion for, ſhall be.

So God bleſs you both; and make things as convenient to my gout as you can; though be it whenever it will, I will hobble to you; for I long to ſee you; and ſtill more to ſee my niece; and am (in expectation of that happy opportunity) *your moſt affectionate uncle*,

M.

LETTER XLI.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

THURSDAY, MAY 25.

THOU ſeeſt, Belford, how we now drive before the wind.—The dear creature now comes almoſt at the firſt word, whenever I deſire the honour of her company. I told her laſt night, that apprehending delay from Pritchard's ſlowneſs, I was determined to leave it to my lord to make his compliments in his own way; and had actually that afternoon put my writings into the hands of a very eminent lawyer, counſellor Williams, with directions for him to draw up ſettlements from my own eſtate, and conformable to thoſe of my mother; which I put into his hands at the ſame time. It had been, I aſſured her, no ſmall part of my concern, that her frequent diſpleaſure, and our mutual miſapprehenſions, had hindered me from adviſing with her before on this ſubject. 'Indeed, indeed, my deareſt life,' ſaid I, 'you have hitherto afforded me but 'a very thorny courtſhip.'

She was ſilent. *Kindly* ſilent. For well know I, that ſhe could have recriminated upon me with a vengeance. But I was willing to ſee, if ſhe were not loth to diſoblige me now. I comforted myſelf, I ſaid, with the hopes, that all my difficulties were now over, and that every paſt diſobligation would be buried in oblivion.

Now, Belford, I have actually depoſited theſe writings with counſellor Williams; and I expect the draughts in a week at fartheſt. So ſhall be doubly armed. For if I *attempt*, and *fail*, theſe will be ready to throw in, to make her have patience with me *till I can try again*.

I have more contrivances ſtill in embryo. I could tell thee of an hundred, and yet hold another hundred in petto, to pop in as I go along, to excite thy ſurprize, and to keep up thy attention. Nor rave thou at me; but, if thou art my friend, think of *Miſs Howe's letters*, and of her *ſmuggling ſcheme*. All owing to my fair captive's informations and incitements. Am I not a *villain*, a *fool*, a *Beelzebub*, with them already? —Yet no harm done by me, nor ſo much as attempted?

Every-thing of this nature, the dear creature anſwered, (with a downcaſt eye, and a bluſhing cheek) ſhe left to me.

I propoſed my lord's chapel for the celebration, where we might have the preſence of Lady Betty, Lady Sarah, and my two couſins Montague.

She ſeemed not to favour a publick celebration; and waved this ſubject for the preſent. I doubted not but ſhe would be as willing as I, to decline a publick wedding; ſo I preſſed not this matter farther juſt then.

But patterns I *actually produced*; and a jeweller was to bring as this day ſeveral ſets of jewels for her choice. But the patterns ſhe would not open. She ſighed at the mention of them: the ſecond patterns, ſhe ſaid, that had been offered to her *. And very peremptorily forbid the jeweller's coming; as well as declined my offer of cauſing my mother's to be new-ſet at leaſt for the preſent.

I do aſſure thee, Belford, I was in earneſt in all this. My whole eſtate is nothing to me, put in competition with her hoped-for favour.

She then told me, that ſhe had put into writing her opinion of my general propoſals; and there had expreſſed her mind, as to cloaths and jewels: but on my ſtrange behaviour to her *(for no cauſe that ſhe knew of)* on Sunday night, ſhe had torn the paper in two.

I earneſtly preſſed her to let me be favoured with a ſight of this paper, torn as it was. And after ſome heſitation, ſhe withdrew, and ſent it to me by Dorcas.

I peruſed it again. It was in a man-

* See Vol. I. Page 128.

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ner new to me, though I had read it so lately: and, by my soul, I could hardly stand it. An hundred admirable creatures I called her to myself. But I charge thee, write not a word to me in her favour, if thou meanest her well; for if I spare her, it must be all *ex mero motu*.

You may easily suppose, when I was re-admitted to her presence, that I ran over in her praises, and in vows of gratitude, and everlasting love. But here's the devil; she still receives all I say with reserve; or if it be not with reserve, she receives it so much *as her due*, that she is not at all raised by it. Some women are undone by praise, by flattery. I myself, a man, am proud of praise. Perhaps thou wilt say, that those are most proud of it, who least deserve it; as those are of riches and grandeur, who are not born to either. I own, that to be superior to these foibles, it requires a soul. Have I not then a soul?—Surely, I have.—Let me then be considered as an exception to the rule.

Now have I foundation to go upon in my terms. My lord, in the exuberance of his generosity, mentions a thousand pounds a year penny-rents. *This I* know, that were I to marry this lady, he would rather settle upon her all he has a mind to settle, than upon me. He has even threatened, that if I prove not a good husband to her, he will leave all he can at his death from me to her. Yet considers not that a woman so perfect can never be displeased with her husband but to *his* disgrace; for who will blame *her*?—Another reason, why a LOVELACE should not wish to marry a CLARISSA.

But what a pretty fellow of an uncle is this foolish peer, to think of making a wife independent of her emperor, and a rebel of course; yet smarted himself for an error of this kind!

My beloved, in her torn paper, mentions but two hundred pounds a year, for her separate use. I insisted upon her naming a larger sum. She said, it might then be three; and I, for fear she should suspect very large offers, named only five; but added the entire disposal of all arrears in her father's hands, for the benefit of Mrs. Norton, or whom she pleased.

She said, that the good woman would be uneasy if any-thing more than a competency were done for her. She was for suiting all her dispositions of this kind, she said, *to the usual way of life of the person*. To go beyond it, was but to put the benefited upon projects, or to make them awkward in a new state; when they might shine in that to which they were accustomed. And to put it into so good a mother's power to give her son a beginning in his business at a proper time; yet to leave her something for herself, to set her above want, or above the necessity of taking back from her child what she had been enabled to bestow upon him; would be the height of such a worthy parent's ambition.

Here's prudence! Here's judgment in so young a creature! How do I hate the Harlowes for producing such an angel!—O why, why, did she refuse my sincere address to tie the knot before we came to this house!

But yet, what mortifies my pride, is, that this exalted creature, if I were to marry her, would not be governed in her behaviour to me by love, but by generosity merely, or by blind duty; and had rather live single, than be mine.

I cannot bear this. I would have the woman whom I honour with my name, if ever I confer this honour upon any, forego even her *superior duties* for me. I would have her look after me when I go out as far as she can see me, as my rose-bud after her Johnny; and meet me at my return with rapture. I would be the subject of her dreams, as well as of her waking thoughts. I would have her think every moment lost, that is not passed with me: sing to me, read to me, play to me when I pleased; no joy so great as in obeying me. When I should be inclined to love, overwhelm me with it; when to be serious or solitary, if apprehensive of intrusion, retiring at a nod; approaching me only if I smiled encouragement: steal not into my presence with silence; out of it, if not noticed, on tiptoe. Be a *Lady Easy* to all my pleasures, and valuing those most who most contributed to them; only sighing in private, that it was not *herself* at the time. Thus of old did the contending wives of the honest patriarchs; each recommending her handmaid

maid to her lord, as she thought it would oblige him, and looking upon the genial product as her own.

The gentle Waller says, *Women are born to be controul'd.* Gentle as he was, he knew that. A tyrant husband makes a dutiful wife. And why do the sex love rakes, but because they know how to direct their uncertain wills, and manage them?

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ANOTHER agreeable conversation. The day of days the subject. As to fixing a particular one, that need not be done, my charmer says, till the settlements are compleated. As to marrying at my lord's chapel, the ladies of my family present, that would be making a publick affair of it; and the dear creature observed with regret, that it seemed to be my lord's intention to make it so.

It could not be imagined, I said, but that his lordship's setting out in a litter, and coming to town, as well as his taste for glare, and the joy he would take to see me married at last, and to her dear self, would give it as much the air of a publick marriage, as if the ceremony were performed at his own chapel, all the ladies present.

'I cannot,' said she, 'endure the 'thoughts of a publick day. It will 'carry with it an air of insult upon my 'whole family. And for my part, if 'my lord will not take it amiss, [And 'perhaps he will not, as the motion 'came not from himself, but from 'you, Mr. Lovelace] I will very 'willingly dispense with his lord-'ship's presence; the rather, as dress 'and appearance will then be unneces-'sary; for I cannot bear to think of 'decking my person while my parents 'are in tears.'

How excellent this! Yet do not her parents richly deserve to be in tears?

See, Belford, with so charming a niceness, we might have been a long time ago upon the verge of the state, and yet found a great deal to do, before we entered into it.

All obedience, all resignation—No will but hers. I withdrew, and wrote directly to my lord; and she not disapproving of it, I sent it away. The purport as follows; for I took no copy.

That I was much obliged to his lordship for his intended goodness to me, on an occasion the most solemn of my life. That the admirable lady, whom he so justly praised, thought his lordship's proposals in her favour too high. That she chose not to make a publick appearance, if, without disobliging my friends, she could avoid it, till a reconciliation with her own could be effected. That although she expressed a grateful sense of his lordship's consent to give her to me with his own hand; yet presuming, that the motive to this kind intention was rather to do her honour, than it otherwise would have been his own choice, (especially as travelling would be at this time so inconvenient to him) she thought it advisable to save his lordship trouble on this occasion; and hoped he would take as meant her declining the favour.

That the Lawn will be most acceptable to us both to retire to; and the rather, as it is so to his lordship.

But, if he pleases, the jointure may be made from my own estate, leaving to his lordship's goodness the alternative.

I conclude with telling him, That I had offered to present the lady his lordship's bill; but on her declining to accept of it, (having myself no present occasion for it) I return it inclosed, with my thanks, *&c.*

And is not this going a plaguy length? What a figure should I make in rakish annals, if at last I should be caught in my own gin?

The sex may say what they will, but a poor innocent fellow had need to take great care of himself, when he dances upon the edge of the matrimonial precipice. Many a faint-hearted man, when he began in jest, or only designed to ape gallantry, has been forced into earnest, by being over-prompt, and taken at his word, not knowing how to own that he meant less than the lady supposed he meant. I am the better enabled to judge that this must have been the case of many a sneaking varlet; because I, who know the female world as well as any man in it of my standing, am so frequently in doubt of myself, and know not what to make of the matter.

Then these little fly rogues, how they lie couchant, ready to spring upon us harmless fellows the moment we are in their reach!—When the ice is once broken for them, how swiftly can they make to port—Mean time, the subject

they can least *speak* to, they most *think* of. Nor can you talk of the ceremony before they have laid out in their minds how it is all to be. Little saucy-face designers! how first they draw themselves in, then us!

But be all these things as they will, Lord M. never in his life received so handsome a letter as this from his nephew

LOVELACE.

The lady, after having given to Miss Howe the particulars contained in Mr. Lovelace's last letter, thus expresses herself:

'A PRINCIPAL consolation arising from these favourable appearances, is, that I, who have now but one only friend, shall most probably, and if it be not my own fault, have as many new ones as there are persons in Mr. Lovelace's family; and this whether Mr. Lovelace treat me kindly or not. And who knows, but that by degrees, those new friends, by their rank and merit, may have weight enough to get me restored to the favour of my relations? Till which can be effected, I shall not be tolerably easy. Happy I never expect to be. Mr. Lovelace's mind and mine are vastly different; different *essentials*.

'But as matters are at present circumstanced, I pray you, my dear friend, to keep to yourself everything that might bring discredit to him, if revealed.—Better any-body expose a man than a wife, if I *am* to be his; and what is said by you will be thought to come from me.

'It shall be my constant prayer, that all the felicities which this world can afford, may be yours: and that the Almighty will never suffer you nor yours, to the remotest posterity, to want such a friend as my Anna Howe has been to *her*

'CLARISSA HARLOWE.'

LETTER XLII.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

AND now, that my beloved seems secure in my net, for my project upon the vixen Miss Howe, and upon her mother: in which the officious prancer Hickman is to come in for a dash.

'But why upon her mother,' methinks thou askest; 'who, unknown to 'herself, has only acted, by thy impulse, through thy agent Joseph Leman, upon the folly of old Tony the 'uncle?'

No matter for that: she believes she acts upon her own judgment; and deserves to be punished for pretending to judgment, when she has none.—Every living soul, but myself, I can tell thee, shall be punished, that treats either cruelly or disrespectfully so adored a lady.—What a plague! is it not enough that she is teazed and tormented in person by me?

I have already broken the matter to our three confederates; as a *supposed*, not a *resolved on* case indeed. And yet they know, that with me, in a piece of mischief, execution with it's swiftest feet, is seldom three paces behind projection, which hardly ever limps neither.

MOWBRAY is not against it. It is a scheme, he says, worthy of us: and we have not done any-thing for a good while, that has made a noise.

BELTON indeed hesitates a little, because matters go wrong between him and his Thomasine; and the poor fellow has not the courage to have his sore place probed to the bottom.

TOURVILLE has started a fresh game, and shrugs his shoulders, and should not *chuse* to go abroad at present, *if I please*. For I apprehend that (from the *nature* of the project) there will be a kind of necessity to travel, till all is blown over.

TO ME, one country is as good as another; and I shall soon, I suppose, chuse to quit this paltry island; except the mistress of my fate will consent to cohabit at *home*; and so lay me under no necessity of *surprizing her into foreign parts*. TRAVELLING, thou knowest, gives the sexes charming opportunities of being familiar with one another. A very few days and nights must now decide all matters bewixt me and my fair inimitable.

DOLEMAN, who can act in these causes only as chamber-counsel, will inform us by pen and ink, [his right-hand and right-side having not yet been struck, and the other side beginning to be

be ſenſible] of all that ſhall occur in our abſence.

As for THEE, we had rather have thy company than not; for, although thou art a wretched fellow at contrivance, yet art thou intrepid at execution. But as thy preſent engagements make thy attendance uncertain, I am not for making thy part neceſſary to our ſcheme; but for leaving thee to come after us when abroad. I know thou canſt not long live without us.

The project, in ſhort, is this:—Mrs. Howe has an elder ſiſter in the Iſle of Wight, who is lately a widow; and I am well informed, that the mother and daughter have engaged, before the latter is married, to pay a viſit to this lady, who is rich, and intends Miſs for her heireſs; and in the interim will make her ſome valuable preſents on her approaching nuptials; which, as Mrs. Howe, who loves money more than anything but herſelf, told one of my acquaintance, would be *worth fetching*.

Now, Jack, nothing more need be done, than to hire a little trim veſſel, which ſhall ſail a pleaſuring backward and forward to Portſmouth, Spithead, and the Iſle of Wight, for a week or fortnight before we enter upon our parts of the plot. And as Mrs. Howe will be for making the beſt bargain ſhe can for her paſſage, the maſter of the veſſel may have orders (as a perquiſite allowed him by his owners) to take what ſhe will give: and the maſter's name, be it what you will, ſhall be *Ganmore* on the occaſion; for I know a rogue of that name, who is not obliged to be of any country, any more than we.

Well, then, we will imagine them on board. I will be there in diſguiſe. They know not any of ye four—ſuppoſing (the ſcheme ſo inviting) that thou canſt be one.

'Tis plaguy hard, if we cannot *find*, or *make* a ſtorm.

Perhaps they will be ſea-ſick: but whether they be or not, no doubt they will keep their cabin.

Here will be Mrs. Howe, Miſs Howe, Mr. Hickman, a maid, and a footman, I ſuppoſe; and thus we will order it:

I know it will be hard weather: I *know* it will: and before there can be the leaſt ſuſpicion of the matter, we ſhall be in ſight of Guernſey, Jerſey, Dieppe, Cherbourg, or any-whither on the French coaſt that it ſhall pleaſe us to agree with the winds to blow us: and then, ſecuring the footman, and the women being ſeparated, one of us, according to lots that may be caſt, ſhall overcome, either by perſuaſion or force, the maid-ſervant: that will be no hard taſk; and ſhe is a likely wench: [I have ſeen her often] one, Mrs. Howe; nor can there be much difficulty there; for ſhe is full of health and life; and has been long a widow: another, ['*That*,' ſays the princely lion, 'muſt be *I!*'] the ſaucy daughter; who will be too much frighted to make great reſiſtance: [*Violent* ſpirits, in that ſex, are ſeldom *true* ſpirits—'Tis but where they *can*:] —and after beating about the coaſt for three or four days for recreation's ſake, and to make ſure work, and till we ſee our ſullen birds begin to eat and ſip, we will ſet them all on ſhore where it will be moſt convenient; ſell the veſſel, [To Mrs. Townſend's agents, with all my heart, or to ſome other ſmugglers] or give it to Ganmore; and purſue our travels, and tarry abroad till all is huſhed up.

Now I know thou wilt make difficulties, as it is thy way; while it is mine to conquer them. My other vaſſals made theirs; and I condeſcended to obviate them: as thus I will thine, firſt ſtating them for thee according to what I know of thy phlegm.

'What,' in the firſt place, wilt thou aſk, 'ſhall be done with Hickman? 'who will be in full parade of dreſs 'and primneſs, in order to ſhew the 'old aunt what a deviliſh clever fellow 'of a nephew ſhe is to have.'

What!—I'll tell thee—Hickman, in good manners, will leave the women in their cabin—and, to ſhew his courage with his breeding, be upon deck.

'Well, and ſuppoſe he is?'

Suppoſe he is!—Why then I hope it is eaſy for Ganmore, or any-body elſe, myſelf ſuppoſe in my pea-jacket and great watch-coat, (if any other make a ſcruple to do it) while he ſtands in the way, gaping and ſtaring like a novice, to ſtumble againſt him, and puſh him overboard!—A rich thought!—Is it not, Belford?—He is certainly plaguy officious in the ladies correſpondence; and, I am informed, plays double between mother and daughter, in fear of both.—Doſt not ſee him, Jack?—I do —popping up and down, his wig and

hat floating by him; and paddling, pawing, and dashing, like a frighted mongrel—I am afraid he never ventured to learn to swim.

'But thou wilt not drown the poor 'fellow; wilt thou?'

No, no!—That is not necessary to the project—I hate to do mischiefs supererogatory. The skiff shall be ready to save him, while the vessel keeps it's course: he shall be set on shore with the loss of wig and hat only, and of half of his little wits, at the place where he embarked, or any-where else.

'Well, but shall we not be in danger 'of being hanged for three such enor-'mous rapes, although Hickman should 'escape with only a bellyfull of sea-'water?'

Yes, to be sure, when caught—But is there any likelihood of that?—Besides, have we not been in danger before now for worse facts?—And what is there in being only in *danger?*—If we actually were to appear in open day in England before matters are made up, there will be greater likelihood, that these women will not prosecute, than that they *will*.—For my own part, I should wish they *may*. Would not a brave fellow chuse to appear in court to such an arraignment, confronting women who would do credit to his attempt? This country is more merciful in *these* cases, than in *any others:* I should therefore like to put myself upon my country.

Let me indulge a few reflections upon what thou mayest think the *worst* that *can* happen. I will suppose that thou art one of us; and that all five are actually brought to trial on this occasion: how bravely shall we enter a court, *I* at the head of you, dressed out each man, as if to his wedding appearance!—You are sure of all the women, old and young, of your side.—'What brave fellows!—What fine 'gentlemen!—There goes a charming 'handsome man!'—meaning me, to be sure!—'Who could find in their hearts 'to hang such a gentleman as that?' whispers one lady, sitting perhaps on the right-hand of the recorder: [I suppose the scene to be in London] while another disbelieves that any woman could *fairly* swear against me. All will croud after *me:* it will be each man's happiness (if ye shall chance to be bashful) to be neglected. I shall be found to be the greatest criminal; and my safety, for which the general voice will be engaged, will be yours.

But then comes the triumph of triumphs, that will make the accused look up, while the accusers are covered with confusion.

'Make room there!—Stand by—Give 'back!'—One receiving a rap, another an elbow, half a score a push apiece!

Enter the slow-moving, hood-faced, down-looking plaintiffs.

And first the widow, with a sorrowful countenance, though half-veiled, pitying her daughter more than herself. The people, the women especially, who on this occasion will be five-sixths of the spectators, reproaching her—'You'd 'have the conscience, would you, to 'have five such brave gentlemen as 'these hanged for you know not what?'

Next comes the poor maid—who perhaps had been ravished twenty times before; and had not appeared now, but for company-sake; mincing, simpering, weeping, by turns; not knowing whether she should be sorry or glad.

But every eye dwells upon Miss!—'See, see, the handsome gentleman bow 'to her!'

To the very ground, to be sure, I shall bow; and kiss my hand.

'See her confusion! See! She turns 'from him!'—'Ah! that's because it is 'in open court!' cries an arch one. While others admire her—'Ay! that's 'a girl worth venturing one's neck 'for!'

Then shall we be praised—Even the judges, and the whole crouded bench, will acquit us in their hearts; and every single man wish he had been me!—The women, all the time, disclaiming prosecution, were the case to be their own. To be sure, Belford, the sufferers cannot put half so good a face upon the matter as we.

Then what a noise will this matter make! Is it not enough, suppose us moving from the prison to the Sessions House*, to make a noble heart thump it away most gloriously, when such an

* Within these few years past, a passage has been made from the prison to the Sessions House, whereby malefactors are carried into court without going through the street. Lovelace's triumph on their supposed march shews the wisdom of this alteration.

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one finds himſelf attended to his trial by a parade of guards and officers, of miens and aſpects warlike and unwarlike; himſelf their whole care, and their buſineſs!—weapons in their hands, ſome bright, ſome rufty, equally venerable for their antiquity and inoffenſiveneſs! others of more authoritative demeanor, ſtrutting before with fine painted ſtaves! ſhoals of people following, with a 'Which is he whom the 'young lady appears againſt?'—Then, let us look down, look up, look round, which way we will, we ſhall ſee all the doors, the ſhops, the windows, the ſign-irons, and balconies, (garrets, gutters, and chimney-tops included) all white-capt, black-hooded, and periwigged, or crop-eared up by the *immobile vulgus*: while the floating *ſtreet-ſwarmers*, who have ſeen us paſs by at one place, run with ſtretched-out necks, and ſtrained eye-balls, a round-about way, and elbow and ſhoulder themſelves into places by which we have not paſſed, in order to obtain another ſight of us; every ſtreet continuing to pour out it's ſwarms of late-comers, to add to the gathering ſnowball; who are content to take deſcriptions of our perſons, behaviour, and countenances, from thoſe who had the good fortune to have been in time to ſee us.

Let me tell thee, Jack, I ſee not why (to judge according to our principles and practices) we ſhould not be as much elated in our march, were this to happen to us, as others may be upon any other the moſt *mob-attracting* occaſion—Suppoſe a lord-mayor on his *gawdy*; ſuppoſe a victorious general, or ambaſſador, on his publick entry—Suppoſe (as I began with the *loweſt*) the *grandeſt* parade that can be ſuppoſed, a coronation—For, in all theſe, do not the royal-guard, the heroick train-bands, the pendent, clinging throngs of ſpectators, with their waving heads rolling to-and-fro from houſe-tops to houſe-bottoms and ſtreet-ways, as I have above deſcribed, make the principal part of the raree-ſhew?

And let me aſk thee, If thou doſt not think, that either the mayor, the ambaſſador, or the general, would not make very pitiful figures on their galas, did not the trumpets and tabrets call together the canaille to gaze at them?—Nor perhaps ſhould we be the moſt guilty heroes neither: for who knows how the magiſtrate may have obtained his gold chain? While the general probably returns from cutting of throats, and from murders, ſanctified by cuſtom only.—Cæſar, we are told *, had won, at the age of fifty-ſix, when he was aſſaſſinated, fifty pitched battles, had taken by aſſault above a thouſand towns, and ſlain near 1,200,000 men; I ſuppoſe excluſive of thoſe who fell on his own ſide in ſlaying them. Are not you and I, Jack, innocent men, and babes in ſwadling-cloaths, compared to Cæſar, and to his predeceſſor in heroiſm, Alexander, dubbed for murders and depredation *Magnus?*

The principal difference that ſtrikes me in the compariſon between us and the mayor, the ambaſſador, the general, on *their* gawdies, is, that the mob make a greater noiſe, a louder huzzaing, in the one caſe than the other, which is called *acclamation*, and ends frequently in *higher* taſte, by throwing dead animals at one another, before they diſperſe; in which they have as much joy, as in the former part of the triumph: while they will attend us with all the marks of an awful or ſilent (at moſt only a whiſpering) reſpect; their mouths diſtended, as if ſet open with gags, and their voices generally loſt in goggle-eyed admiration.

Well, but ſuppoſe, after all, we are convicted; what have we to do, but in time to make over our eſtates, that the ſheriffs may not revel in our ſpoils?—There is no fear of being hanged for ſuch a crime as this, while we have *money* or *friends*.—And ſuppoſe even the worſt, that two or three were to die, have we not a chance, each man of us, to eſcape? The devil's in them, if they'll hang five for raviſhing three!

I know I ſhall get off for one—were it but for family-ſake: and being a handſome fellow, I ſhall have a dozen or two of young maidens, all dreſſed in white, go to court to beg my life—And what a pretty ſhew they will make, with their white hoods, white gowns, white petticoats, white ſcarves, white gloves, kneeling for me, with their white handkerchiefs at their eyes, in two pretty

* Pliny gives this account, putting the number of men ſlain at 1,100,092. See alſo Lipſius *de Conſtantia*.

rows,

vows, as his majesty walks through them, and nods my pardon for their sakes!—And, if once pardoned, all is over: for, Jack, in a crime of this nature there lies no appeal, as in a murder.

So thou seest the worst that can happen, should we *not* make the grand tour upon this occasion, but stay and take our trials. But it is most likely, that they will not prosecute at all. If not, no risque on our side will be run: only taking our pleasure abroad, at the worst; leaving friends tired of us, in order, after a time, to return to the same friends endeared to us, as we to them, by absence.

This, Jack, is my scheme, at the first running. I know it is capable of improvement—For example: I can land these ladies in France; whip over before they can get a passage back, or before Hickman can have recovered his fright; and so find means to entrap my beloved on board—And then all will be right; and I need not care if I were never to return to England.

Memorandum, To be considered of—Whether, in order to compleat my vengeance, I cannot contrive to kidnap away either James Harlowe or Solmes? or both? A man, Jack, would not go into exile for nothing.

LETTER XLIII.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

IF, Belford, thou likest not my plot upon Miss Howe, I have three or four more as good in my own opinion; better, perhaps, they will be in thine: and so 'tis but getting loose from thy present engagement, and thou shalt pick and chuse. But as for thy three brethren, they must do as I would have them: and so, indeed, must thou—Else why am I your general? But I will refer this subject to it's proper season. Thou knowest that I never absolutely conclude upon a project, till 'tis time for execution; and then lightning strikes not quicker than I.

And now to the subject next my heart.

Wilt thou believe me, when I tell thee, that I have so many contrivances rising up and crouding upon me for preference, with regard to my Gloriana, that I hardly know which to chuse?—I could tell thee of no less than six princely ones, any of which *must* do. But, as the dear creature has not grudged giving me trouble, I think I ought not, in gratitude, to spare combustibles for her; but on the contrary, to make her stare and stand aghast, by springing three or four mines at once.

Thou remembrest what Shakespeare, in his Troilus and Cressida, makes Hector, who, however, is not used to boast, say to Achilles in an interview between them; and which, applied to this watchful lady, and to the vexation she has given me, and to the certainty I now think I have of subduing her, will run thus: Supposing the charmer before me; and I meditating her sweet person from head to foot—

'Henceforth, *O watchful fair-one!* guard
'thee well:
'For I'll not kill thee there! nor there! nor
'there!
'But, by the *zone that circles Venus' waist*,
'I'll kill thee ev'ry where; yea, o'er and o'er.
'Thou, wisest *Belford*, pardon me this brag:
'*Her watchfulness* draws folly from my lips;
'But I'll endeavour *deeds* to match the *words*,
'Or may I never——'

Then, I imagine thee interposing to qualify my impatience, as Ajax did to Achilles—

'—— Do not chafe thee, cousin:
'——. And let these threats alone,
'Till *accident* or *purpose* bring thee to it.'

All that vexes me, in the midst of my gloried-in devices, is, that there is a sorry fellow in the world, who has presumed to question, whether the prize, when obtained, is worthy of the pains it costs me: yet knows, with what patience and trouble a bird-man will spread an acre of ground with gins and snares; set up his stalking-horse, his glasses; plant his decoy-birds, and invite the feathered throng by his whistle; and all his prize at last (the reward of early hours, and of a whole morning's pains) only a simple linnet.

To be serious, Belford, I must acknowledge, that all our pursuits, from childhood to manhood, are only trifles of different sorts and sizes, proportioned

to

to our years and views: but then is not a fine woman the nobleſt trifle, that ever was or could be obtained by man? —And to what purpoſe do we ſay *obtained*,' if it be not in the way we wiſh for?—If a man is rather to be *her* prize, than ſhe *his*?

* *

And now, Belford, what doſt think?

'That thou art a curſed fellow if—'

If—No if's—But I ſhall be very ſick to-morrow. I ſhall, 'faith.

'Sick!—Why ſick? What a devil 'ſhouldſt thou be ſick for?'

For more good reaſons than one, Jack.

'I ſhould be glad to hear but one.

'—Sick, quotha! Of all thy roguiſh 'inventions I ſhould not have thought 'of this.'

Perhaps thou thinkeſt my view to be, to draw the lady to my bedſide. That's a trick of three or four thouſand years old; and I ſhould find it much more to my purpoſe, if I could get to hers. However, I'll condeſcend to make thee as wiſe as myſelf.

I am exceſſively diſturbed about this ſmuggling ſcheme of Miſs Howe. I have no doubt, that my fair-one, were I to make an attempt, and miſcarry, will fly from me, if ſhe can. I once believed ſhe loved me: but now I doubt whether ſhe does or not: at leaſt, that it is with ſuch an *ardour*, as Miſs Howe calls it, as will make her overlook a premeditated fault, ſhould I be guilty of one.

'And what will being ſick do for 'thee?'

Have patience. I don't intend to be ſo very bad as Dorcas ſhall repreſent me to be. But yet I know I ſhall reach confoundedly, and bring up ſome clotted blood. To be ſure, I ſhall break a veſſel: there's no doubt of that: and a bottle of Eaton's Styptick ſhall be ſent for; but no doctor. If ſhe has *humanity*, ſhe will be concerned. But if ſhe has *love*, let it have been puſhed ever ſo far back, it will, on this occaſion, come forward, and ſhew itſelf; not only in her eye, but in every line of her ſweet face.

I will be very intrepid. I will not fear death, or any-thing elſe. I will be ſure of being well in an hour or two, having formerly found great benefit by this aſtringent medicine, on occaſion of an inward bruiſe by a fall from my horſe in hunting, of which perhaps this malady may be the remains. And this will ſhew her, that though thoſe about me may make the moſt of it, I do not; and ſo can have no deſign in it.

'Well,' methinks thou ſayeſt, 'I 'begin to think tolerably of this de-'vice.'

I knew thou wouldſt, when I explained myſelf. Another time prepare to wonder; and baniſh doubt.

Now, Belford, I ſhall expect, that ſhe will ſhew ſome concern at the broken veſſel, as it may be attended with fatal effects, eſpecially to one ſo fiery in his temper as I have the *reputation* to be thought to be: and the rather, as I ſhall calmly attribute the accident to the harraſſes and doubts under which I have laboured for ſome time paſt. And this will be a further proof of my love, and will demand a grateful return—

'And what then, thou egregious 'contriver?'

Why then I ſhall have the *leſs remorſe*, if I am to uſe a little violence: for can *ſhe* deſerve compaſſion, who ſhews none?

'And what if ſhe ſhew a *great deal* '*of concern?*'

Then ſhall I be in hopes of *building on a good foundation*. Love hides a multitude of faults, and diminiſhes thoſe it cannot hide. Love, when acknowledged, authorizes freedom; and freedom begets freedom; and I ſhall then ſee how far I can go.

'Well but, Lovelace, how the deuce 'wilt thou, with that full health and 'vigour of conſtitution, and with that 'bloom in thy face, make any-body 'believe thou art ſick?'

How!—Why, take a few grains of ipecacuanha; enough to make me reach like a fury.

'Good!—But how wilt thou ma-'nage to bring up blood, and not hurt 'thyſelf?'

Fooliſh fellow! Are there not pigeons and chickens, in every poulterer's ſhop?

Cry thy mercy.

But then I will be perſuaded by Mrs. Sinclair, that I have of late confined myſelf too much; and ſo will have a chair called, and be carried to the Park; where I will try to walk half the length of the Mall, or ſo; and in my return, amuſe myſelf at White's or the Cocoa.

'And what will this do?'

Queſtioning again!—I am afraid thou're

thou'rt an infidel, Belford—Why then shall I not know if my beloved offers to go out in my absence?—And shall I not see whether she receives me with tenderness at my return? But this is not all: *I have a foreboding that something affecting will happen while I am out.* But of this more in it's place.

And now, Belford, wilt thou, or wilt thou not, allow, that it is a right thing to be sick?—Lord, Jack, so much delight do I take in my contrivances, that I shall be half-sorry, when the occasion for them is over; for never, never, shall I again have such a charming exercise for my invention.

Mean time these plaguy women are so impertinent, so full of reproaches, that I know not how to do any-thing but curse them. And then, truly, they are for helping me out with some of *their* trite and vulgar artifices. Sally particularly, who pretends to be a mighty contriver, has just now in an insolent manner told me, on my rejecting her proffered aids, that I had no mind to conquer; and that I was so *wicked* as to intend to marry, though I would not own it to her.

Because this little devil made her first sacrifice at my altar, she thinks she may take any liberty with me: and what makes her outrageous at times, is, that I have, for a long time, *studiously*, as she says, slighted her too readily-offered favours: but is it not very impudent in her to think, that I will be any man's *successor?* It is not come to that neither. This thou knowest, was always my rule—*Once any other man's*, and *I* know it, and *never more mine.* It is for such as thou, and thy brethren, to take up with *harlots.* I have been always aiming at the merit of a first discoverer.

The more devil I, perhaps thou wilt say, to endeavour to corrupt the uncorrupted.

But I say, *not*; since, hence, I have but very few adulteries to answer for.

One affair, indeed, at Paris, with a married lady [I believe I never told thee of it] touched my conscience a little: yet brought on by the spirit of intrigue, more than by sheer wickedness. I'll give it thee in brief:

A French marquis, somewhat in years, employed by his court in a public function at that of Madrid, had put his charming young new-married wife under the controul and *wardship*, as I may say, of his insolent sister, an old prude.

I saw the lady at the opera. I liked her at first sight, and better at second, when I knew the situation she was in. So, pretending to make my addresses to the prude, got admittance to both.

The first thing I had to do, was to compliment my prude into shyness by complaints of shyness; next to take advantage of the marquise's situation, between her husband's jealousy, and his sister's arrogance; and to inspire her with resentment; and, as I hoped, with a regard to my person. The French ladies have no dislike to intrigue.

The sister began to suspect me: the lady had no mind to part with the company of the only man who had been permitted to visit there; and told me of her sister's suspicions. I put her upon concealing the prude, as if unknown to me, in a closet in one of her own apartments, locking her in, and putting the key in her own pocket: and she was to question me on the sincerity of my professions to her sister, in her sister's hearing.

She complied. My mistress was locked up. The lady and I took our seats. I owned fervent love, and made high professions: for the marquise put it home to me. The prude was delighted with what she heard.

And how dost think it ended?—I took my advantage of the lady herself, who durst not for her life cry out; and drew her after me to the next apartment, on pretence of going to seek her sister, who all the time was locked up in the closet.

No woman ever gave me a private meeting for nothing; my dearest Miss Harlowe excepted.

My ingenuity obtained my pardon: the lady being unable to forbear laughing through the whole affair, to find both so uncommonly tricked; her gaolereſs her prisoner, safe locked up, and as much pleased as either of us.

The Englisb, Jack, do not often outwit the French.

We had contrivances afterwards equally ingenious, in which the lady, the ice once broken, [*Once subdued, always subdued*] co-operated—But a more tender tell-tale revealed the secret—revealed it, before the marquis could come to cover the disgrace. The sister

was

was inveterate; the husband irreconcileable; in every respect unfit for a husband, even for a *French* one—made, perhaps, more delicate to these particulars by the customs of a people among whom he was then resident, so contrary to those of his own countrymen. She was obliged to throw herself into my protection—Nor thought herself unhappy in it, till childbed pangs seized her: then penitence, and death, overtook her the same hour!

Excuse a tear, Belford!—She deserved a better fate! What had such a vile inexorable husband to answer for!—The sister was punished effectually—That pleases me on reflection—The sister was effectually punished!—But perhaps I told thee this story before.

LETTER XLIV.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

FRIDAY EVENING.

JUST returned from an airing with my charmer, complied with after great importunity. She was attended by the two nymphs. They both topt their parts; kept their eyes within bounds; made moral reflections now-and-then. O Jack! what devils are women, when all tests are got over, and we have compleatly ruined them!

The coach carried us to Hampstead, to Highgate, to Muswell Hill; back to Hampstead to the Upper Flask: there, in compliment to the nymphs, my beloved consented to alight, and take a little repast. Then home early by Kentish Town.

Delightfully easy she, and so respectful and obliging I, all the way, and as we walked out upon the Heath, to view the variegated prospects which that agreeable elevation affords, that she promised to take now-and-then a little excursion with me. 'I think, Miss 'Howe, I *think*,' said I to myself, every now-and-then as we walked, 'that 'thy wicked devices are superseded.'

But let me give thee a few particulars of our conversation in the *circumrotation* we took, while in the coach—She had received a letter from Miss Howe yesterday, I presumed?

She made no answer. How happy should I think myself to be admitted into their correspondence? I would joyfully make an exchange of communications.

So, though I hoped not to succeed by her consent, [and little did she think I had so happily in part succeeded without it] I thought it not amiss to urge for it, for several reasons: among others, that I might account to her for my constant employment at my pen; in order to take off her jealousy, that *she* was the subject of thy correspondence and mine: and that I might justify *my* secrecy and *uncommunicativeness* by her *own*.

I proceeded therefore—That I loved familiar-letter-writing, as I had more than once told her, above all the species of writing: it was writing from the heart, (without the fetters prescribed by method or study) as the very word *cor-respondence* implied. Not the heart only; the *soul* was in it. Nothing of body, when friend writes to friend; the mind impelling sovereignly the vassal-fingers. It was, in short, friendship recorded; friendship given under hand and seal; demonstrating that the parties were under no apprehension of changing from time or accident, when they so liberally gave testimonies, which would always be ready, on a failure or infidelity, to be turned against them.—For my own part, it was the principal diversion I had in her absence; but for this innocent amusement, the distance she so frequently kept me at, would have been intolerable.

Sally knew my drift; and said, She had had the honour to see two or three of my letters, and of Mr. Belford's; and she thought them the most entertaining that she had ever read.

My friend Belford, I said, had a happy talent in the letter-writing way; and upon all subjects.

I expected my beloved would have been inquisitive after our subject: but (lying perdue, as I saw) not a word said she. So I touched upon this article myself.

Our topicks were various and diffuse: sometimes upon literary articles; [she was very attentive upon this] sometimes upon the publick entertainments; sometimes amusing each other with the fruits of the different correspondences we held with people abroad, with whom we had contracted friendships; sometimes upon

the foibles and perfections of our particular friends; ſometimes upon our own preſent and future hopes; ſometimes aiming at huinour and raillery upon each other.—It might indeed appear to ſavour of vanity, to ſuppoſe my letters would entertain a lady of her delicacy and judgment: but yet I could not but ſay, that perhaps ſhe would be far from thinking ſo hardly of me as ſometimes ſhe had ſeemed to do, if ſhe were to ſee the letters which generally paſſed between Mr. Belford and me. [I hope, Jack, thou haſt more manners, than to give me the lye, though but in thy heart.]

She then ſpoke: after declining my compliment in ſuch a manner, as only a perſon could do, who deſerved it, ſhe ſaid, for her part, ſhe had always thought me a man of ſenſe. [A man of ſenſe, Jack! What a niggardly praiſe!] —And ſhould therefore hope, that, when I wrote, it exceeded even my ſpeech: for it was impoſſible, be the letters written in as eaſy and familiar a ſtile as they would, but that they muſt have that advantage from ſitting down to write them which prompt ſpeech could not always have. She ſhould think it very ſtrange therefore, if my letters were barren of ſentiment; and *as* ſtrange, if I gave myſelf liberties upon *premeditation*, which could have no excuſe at all, but from a thoughtleſſneſs, which itſelf wanted excuſe.—But if Mr. Belford's letters and mine were upon ſubjects ſo general, and ſome of them equally (ſhe preſumed) inſtructive and entertaining, ſhe could not but ſay, that ſhe ſhould be glad to ſee any of them; and particularly thoſe which Miſs Martin had ſeen and praiſed.

This was put cloſe.

I looked at her, to ſee if I could diſcover any tincture of jealouſy in this hint; that *Miſs Martin* had ſeen what I had not ſhewn to *her*. But ſhe did not look it: ſo I only ſaid, I ſhould be very proud to ſhew her not only thoſe, but all that paſſed between Mr. Belford and me; but I muſt remind her, that ſhe knew the condition.

'No, indeed!' with a ſweet lip pouted out, as ſaucy as pretty; implying a lovely ſcorn, that yet can only be lovely in youth ſo blooming, and beauty ſo divinely diſtinguiſhed.

How I long to ſee ſuch a motion again! *Her* mouth only can give it.

But I am mad with love—Yet eternal will be the diſtance, at the rate I go on: now fire, now ice, my ſoul is continually upon the *biſs*, as I may ſay. In vain, however, is the trial to quench—what, after all, is unquenchable.

Pr'ythee, Belford, forgive my nonſenſe, and my Vulcan-like metaphors —Did I not tell thee, not that I am *ſick* of love, but that I am *mad* with it? Why brought I ſuch an angel into ſuch a houſe? into ſuch company?—And why do I not ſtop my ears to the ſyrens, who, knowing my averſion to wedlock, are perpetually touching that ſtring?

I was not willing to be anſwered ſo eaſily: I was ſure, that what paſſed between two ſuch young ladies (friends ſo dear) might be ſeen by every-body: I had more reaſon than any-body to wiſh to ſee the letters that paſſed between her and Miſs Howe; becauſe I was ſure they muſt be full of admirable inſtruction, and one of the dear correſpondents had deigned to wiſh my entire reformation.

She looked at me, as if ſhe would look me through: I thought I *felt* eye-beam, after eye-beam, penetrate my ſhivering reins.—But ſhe was ſilent. Nor needed her eyes the aſſiſtance of ſpeech.

Nevertheleſs, a little recovering myſelf, I hoped that nothing unhappy had befallen either Miſs Howe or her mother. The letter of yeſterday ſent by a particular hand; ſhe opening it with great emotion—ſeeming to have expected it ſooner—were the reaſons for my apprehenſions.

We were then at Muſwell Hill: *a pretty country within the eye*, to Polly, was the remark, inſtead of replying to *me*.

But I was not ſo to be anſwered—I ſhould expect ſome charming ſubjects and characters from two ſuch pens: I hoped every-thing went on well between Mr. Hickman and Miſs Howe. Her mother's heart, I ſaid, was ſet upon that match: Mr. Hickman was not without his merits: he was what the ladies called a SOBER man: but I muſt needs ſay, that I thought Miſs Howe deſerved a huſband of a very different caſt!

This, I ſuppoſe, would have enraged her into a ſubject from which I could have wiredrawn ſomething:—for Hick-

man

man is one of her favourites—Why, I can't divine, except for the ſake of oppoſition of character to that of thy honeſt friend.

But ſhe cut me ſhort by a look of diſapprobation, and another cool remark upon a diſtant view; and, 'How far 'off, Miſs Horton, do you think that 'clump of trees may be?' pointing out of the coach—So I had done.

Here endeth all I have to write concerning our converſation on this our agreeable airing.

We have both been writing ever ſince we came home. I am to be favoured with her company for an hour, before ſhe retires to reſt.

All that obſequious love can ſuggeſt, in order to engage her tendereſt ſentiments for me againſt to-morrow's ſickneſs, will I aim at when we meet. But at parting will complain of a diſorder in my ſtomach.

* *

We have met. All was love and unexceptionable reſpect on my part. Eaſe and complaiſance on hers. She was concerned for my diſorder. So ſudden! —Juſt as we parted! But it was nothing. I ſhould be quite well by morning.

Faith, Jack, I think I am ſick already. Is it poſſible for ſuch a giddy fellow as me to *perſuade* myſelf to be ill! I am a better mimick at this rate than I wiſh to be. But every nerve and fibre of me is always ready to contribute it's aid, whether by health or by ailment, to carry a reſolved-on roguery into execution.

Dorcas has tranſcribed for me the whole letter of Miſs Howe, dated Sunday, May 14 *, of which before I had only extracts. She found no other letter added to that parcel: but this and that which I copied myſelf in character laſt Sunday while ſhe was at church, relating to the ſmuggling ſcheme †, are enough for me.

* *

Dorcas tells me, that her lady has been removing her papers from the mahogany-cheſt into a wainſcot-box, which held her linen, and which ſhe put into her dark cloſet. We have no key of that at preſent. No doubt but all her letters, previous to thoſe I have come at, are in that box. Dorcas is uneaſy upon it: yet hopes that her lady does not ſuſpect her; for ſhe is ſure that ſhe laid in every-thing as ſhe found it.

LETTER XLV.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

COCOA-TREE, SATURDAY, MAY 27.

THIS ipecacuanha is a moſt diſagreeable medicine. That theſe curſed phyſical folks can find out nothing to do us good, but what would poiſon the devil! In the other world, were they only to take phyſick, it would be puniſhment enough of itſelf for a miſ-ſpent life. A doctor at one elbow, and an apothecary at the other, and the poor ſoul labouring under their preſcribed operations, he need no worſe tormentors.

But now this was to take down my countenance. It has done it: for, with violent reachings, having taken enough to make me ſick, and not enough water to carry it off, I preſently looked as if I had kept my bed a fortnight. *Ill jeſting*, as I thought in the midſt of the exerciſe, *with edge-tools*, and worſe with *phyſical ones*.

Two hours it held me. I had forbid Dorcas to let her lady know any-thing of the matter; out of tenderneſs to her; being willing, when ſhe knew my prohibition, to let her ſee that I *expected* her to be concerned for me.

Well, but Dorcas was, nevertheleſs, a *woman*, and ſhe can *whiſper* to her lady the ſecret ſhe is enjoined to keep!

'Come hither, toad,' [ſick as a devil at the inſtant;] 'let me ſee what a 'mixture of grief and ſurprize may 'be beat up together in thy pudding-'face.

'That won't do. That dropt jaw, 'and mouth diſtended into the long 'oval, is more upon the horrible, than 'the grievous.

'Nor that pinking and winking with 'thy *odious eyes*, as my charmer once 'called them.

'A little better *that*; yet not quite 'right: but keep your mouth cloſer. 'You have a muſcle or two which you 'have no command of, between your 'cheek-bone and your lips, that ſhould

* See Page 485, *& ſeq.*

† See Page 517, *& ſeq.*

'carry one corner of your mouth up 'towards your crow's-foot, and that 'down to meet it.

'There! Be gone! Be in a plaguy 'hurry running up ſtairs and down, to 'fetch from the dining-room what you 'carry up on purpoſe to fetch, till mo- 'tion extraordinary put you out of 'breath, and give you the ſigh-na- 'tural.'

'What's the matter, Dorcas?'

'Nothing, Madam.'

My beloved wonders ſhe has not ſeen me this morning, no doubt; but is too ſhy to ſay ſhe wonders. Repeated 'What's the matter!' however, as Dorcas runs up and down ſtairs by her door, bring on, 'Oh! Madam!—my 'maſter!—my poor maſter!'

'What! How! When!'—And all the monoſyllables of ſurprize.

[*Within parentheſes* let me tell thee, that I have often thought, that the little words in the republick of letters, like the little folks in a nation, are the moſt ſignificant. The *triſyllables*, and the *rumblers* of ſyllables more than *three*, are but the good-for-little *magnates*.]

'I muſt not tell you, Madam—My 'maſter ordered me not to tell you— 'But he is in a worſe way than he 'thinks for!—But he would not have 'you frighted.'

High concern took poſſeſſion of every ſweet feature. She pitied me!—By my ſoul, ſhe pitied me!

'Where is he?'

Too much in a hurry for good-manners, [*Another parentheſis, Jack!* Good-manners are ſo little natural, that we ought to be *compoſed* to obſerve them: politeneſs will not live in a ſtorm.] 'I 'cannot ſtay to anſwer queſtions,' cries the wench—though deſirous to anſwer. —[*A third parentheſis*—Like the people crying proclamations, running away from the cuſtomers they want to ſell to.] This hurry puts the lady in a hurry to aſk, [*A fourth*, by way of embelliſhing the third!] as the other does the people in a hurry to buy. And I have in my eye now a whole ſtreet raiſed, and running after a proclamation or expreſs-crier, as if the firſt was a thief, the other his purſuers.

At laſt, 'O Lord! let Mrs. Love- 'lace know—There is danger, to be 'ſure!' whiſpered from one nymph to another; but at the door, and ſo loud, that my liſtening fair-one might hear.

Out ſhe darts—'As how!—as how, 'Dorcas!'

'O Madam—A vomiting of blood! 'A veſſel broke, to be ſure!'

Down ſhe haſtens; finds every-one as buſy over my blood in the entry, as if it were that of the Neapolitan Saint.

In ſteps my charmer, with a face of ſweet concern,

'*How do you*, Mr. Lovelace?'

'O my beſt love!—Very well!—Very 'well!—Nothing at all!—Nothing of 'conſequence!—I ſhall be well in an 'inſtant!'—Straining again! for I was indeed plaguy ſick, though no more blood came.

In ſhort, Belford, I have gained my end. I ſee the dear ſoul loves me. I ſee ſhe forgives me all that's paſt. I ſee I have credit for a new ſcore.

Miſs Howe, I defy thee, my dear—Mrs. Townſend!—Who the devil are you?—Troop away with your contra-bands. No ſmuggling! nor ſmuggler, but myſelf! Nor will the choiceſt of my fair-one's favours be long prohibited goods to me.

* *

EVERY-ONE now is ſure that ſhe loves me. Tears were in her eyes more than once for me. She ſuffered me to take her hand, and kiſs it as often as I pleaſed. On Mrs. Sinclair's mentioning, that I too much confined myſelf, ſhe preſſed me take an airing; but obligingly deſired me to be careful of myſelf. Wiſhed I would adviſe with a phyſician. *God made phyſicians*, ſhe ſaid.

I did not think that, Jack. God, indeed, made us all. But I fancy ſhe meant *phyſick* inſtead of *phyſicians*; and then the phraſe might mean what the vulgar phraſe means—*God ſends meat, the devil cooks*.

I was well already, on taking the ſtyptick from *her* dear hands.

On her requiring me to take the air, I aſked, If I might have the honour of her company in a coach; and this, that I might obſerve if ſhe had an intention of going out in my abſence.

If ſhe thought a chair were not a more proper vehicle for my caſe, ſhe would with all her heart!

'There's a precious!'

I kiſſed her hand again! She was all goodneſs!—'Would to Heaven I better 'deſerved it!' I ſaid.—But all were golden days before us!—Her preſence

and

and generous concern had done every-thing. I was well! Nothing ailed me. But since my beloved will have it so, I'll take a little airing!—Let a chair be called!—'O my charmer! *were I to have owed this indisposition to my late harrasses, and to the uneasiness I have had for disobliging you*; all is infinitely compensated by your goodness—All the art of healing is in your smiles!—Your late displeasure was the only malady!'

While Mrs. Sinclair, and Dorcas, and Polly, and even poor silly Mabell, [for Sally went out, as my angel came in] with uplifted hands and eyes, stood thanking Heaven that I was better, in audible whispers: 'See the power of love!' cried one.—'What a charming husband!' another.—'Happy couple!' all.

O how the dear creature's cheek mantled!—How her eyes sparkled!—How sweetly acceptable is praise to conscious merit, while it but reproaches when applied to the undeserving!—What a new, what a gay creation it makes at once in a diffident or dispirited heart!

And now, Belford, was it not worth while to be sick? And yet I must tell thee, that too many pleasanter expedients offer themselves, to make trial any more of this confounded ipecacuanha.

LETTER XLVI.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

SATURDAY, MAY 27.

MR. Lovelace, my dear, has been very ill. Suddenly taken. With a vomiting of blood in great quantities. Some vessel broken. He complained of a disorder in his stomach over-night. I was the more affected with it, *as I am afraid it was occasioned by the violent contentions between us.*—But was I in fault?

How lately did I think I hated him!—But hatred and anger, I see, are but temporary passions with me. One cannot, my dear, hate people in danger of death, or who are in distress or affliction. My heart, I find, is not proof against kindness, and acknowledgment of errors committed.

He took great care to have his illness concealed from me as long as he could. So tender in the violence of his disorder!—So desirous to make the best of it!—I wish he had not been ill in my sight. I was too much affected—Every-body alarming me with his danger—The poor man, from such high health, so *suddenly* taken!—And so unprepared!

He is gone out in a chair. I advised him to do so. I fear that my advice was wrong; since quiet in such a disorder must needs be best. We are apt to be so ready, in cases of emergency, to give our advice, without judgment, or waiting for it!—I proposed a physician indeed; but he would not hear of one. I have great honour for the faculty; and the greater, as I have always observed, that those who treat the professors of the art of healing contemptuously, too geneally treat higher institutions in the same manner.

I am really very uneasy. For I have, I doubt, exposed myself to him, and to the women below. *They* indeed will excuse me, as they think us married. But if he be not generous, I shall have cause to regret this surprize; which (as I had reason to think myself unaccountably treated by him) has taught me more than I knew of myself.

'Tis true, I have owned more than once, that I could have liked Mr. Lovelace above all men. I remember the debates you and I used to have on this subject, when I was your happy guest. You used to say, and once you wrote*, that men of his cast are the men that our sex do not *naturally* dislike: while I held, that such were not (however *that* might be) the men we *ought* to like. But what with my relations precipitating of me, on one hand, and what with his unhappy character, and embarrassing ways, on the other, I had no more leisure than inclination to examine my own heart in this particular. And this reminds me of a passage in one of your former letters, which I will transcribe, though it was written in raillery. '*May it not be*,' say you †, '*that you have had such persons to deal with, as have not allowed you to attend to the throbs; or, if you had them a little*

* See P. 501.

† See Vol. I. P. 35.

* *a little now and then, whether, having had two accounts to place them to, you have not by mistake put them to the wrong one?*' A passage, which, although it came into my mind when Mr. Lovelace was least exceptionable, yet that I have denied any efficacy to, when he has teazed and vexed me, and given me cause of suspicion. For, after all, my dear, Mr. Lovelace is not wise in all his ways. And should we not endeavour, as much as is possible, (where we are not attached by *natural* ties) to like and dislike as reason bids us, and according to the merit or demerit of the object? If love, as it is called, is allowed to be an excuse for our most unreasonable follies, and to lay level all the fences that a careful education has surrounded us by, what is meant by the doctrine of subduing our passions?—But, O my dearest friend, am I not guilty of a punishable fault, were I to love this man of errors? And has not my own heart deceived me, when I thought I did not? And what must be that love, that has not some degree of purity for it's object? I am afraid of recollecting some passages in my cousin Morden's letter*.—And yet why fly I from subjects that, duly considered, might tend to correct and purify my heart? I have carried, I doubt, my notions on this head too high, not for practice, but for *my* practice. Yet think me not guilty of prudery neither; for had I found out as much of myself before; or, rather, had he given me heart's ease enough before to find it out, you should have had my confession sooner.

Nevertheless, let me tell you, (what I hope I may justly tell you) that if again he give me cause to resume distance and reserve, I hope my reason will gather strength enough from his imperfections, to enable me to keep my passions under.—What can we do more than govern ourselves by the temporary lights lent us?

You will not wonder that I am grave on this detection—*Detection*, must I call it? What can I call it?

Dissatisfied with myself, I am afraid to look back upon what I have written: and yet know not how to have done writing. I never was in such an odd frame of mind.—I know not how to describe it.—Was *you* ever *so*?—Afraid of the censure of her you love—Yet not conscious that you deserve it?

Of this, however, I am convinced, that I should *indeed* deserve censure, if I kept any secret of my heart from you.

But I will not add another word, after I have assured you, that I will look still more narrowly into myself: and that I am *your equally sincere and affectionate*

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER XLVII.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

SAT. EVENING.

I Had a charming airing. No return of my malady. My heart perfectly easy, how could my stomach be otherwise?

But when I came home, I found that my sweet soul had been alarmed by *a new incident*—The enquiry after us both, in a very suspicious manner, and that by description of our persons, and not by names, by a servant in a blue livery turned up and trimmed with yellow.

Dorcas was called to him, as the upper-servant; and she refusing to answer any of the fellow's questions, unless he told his business, and from whom he came, the fellow (as short as she) said, That if she would not answer *him*, perhaps she might answer somebody *else*; and went away out of humour.

Dorcas hurried up to her lady, and alarmed her not only with the fact, but with her own conjectures; adding, that he was an ill-looking fellow, and she was sure could come for no good.

The livery and the features of the servant were particularly enquired after, and as particularly described—*Lord bless her! no end of her alarms, she thought!* And then did her apprehensions anticipate every evil that could happen.

She wished Mr. Lovelace would come in.

Mr. Lovelace came in soon after; all lively, grateful, full of hopes, of du-

* See P. 464, & *seq.* of this Volume.

ty,

ty, of love, to thank his charmer, and to congratulate with her upon the cure she had performed. And then she told the story, with all it's circumstances; and Dorcas, to point her lady's fears, told us, that the servant was a sunburnt fellow, and looked as if he had been at sea.

He was then, no doubt, Captain Singleton's servant, and the next news we should hear, was, that the house was surrounded by a whole ship's crew; the vessel lying no farther off, as she understood, than Rotherhithe.

'Impossible,' I said. 'Such an *attempt* would not be ushered in by 'such a *manner of enquiry*. And why 'may it not rather be a servant of your 'cousin Morden, with notice of his 'arrival, and of his design to attend 'you?'

This surmise delighted her. Her apprehensions went off, and she was at leisure to congratulate me upon my sudden recovery; which she did in the most obliging manner.

But we had not sat long together, when Dorcas again came fluttering up to tell us, that the footman, the *very* footman was again at the door, and enquired, whether Mr. Lovelace and his lady, *by name*, had not lodgings in this house? He asked, he told Dorcas, for no harm: but his disavowing of harm, was a demonstration with my apprehensive fair-one, that harm was intended. And as the fellow had not been answered by Dorcas, I proposed to go down to the street-parlour, and hear what he had to say.

'I see your causeless terror, my dear-'est life,' said I, 'and your impatience '—Will you be pleased to walk down '—And without being observed, (for 'he shall come no farther than the par-'lour-door) you may hear all that 'passes?'

She consented. We went down. Dorcas bid the man come forward. 'Well, friend, what is your business 'with Mr. and Mrs. Lovelace?'

Bowing, scraping, 'I am sure *you* 'are the gentleman, Sir. Why, Sir, 'my business is only to know if your 'honour be here, and to be spoken 'with; or if you shall be here for any 'time?'

'Whom came you from?'

'From a gentleman who ordered me 'to say, if I was *made* to tell, but not 'else, it was from a friend of Mr. 'John Harlowe, Mrs. Lovelace's eld-'est uncle.'

The dear creature was ready to sink upon this. *It was but of late that she had provided herself with salts.* She pulled them out.

'Do you know any-thing of Colo-'nel Morden, friend?' said I.

'No; I never heard of his name.'

'Of Captain Singleton?'

'No, Sir. But the gentleman, my 'master, is a captain too.'

'What is his name?'

'I don't know if I should tell.'

'There can be no harm in telling 'the gentleman's name, if you come 'upon a good account.'

'That I do; for my master told me 'so; and there is not an honester gen-'tleman on the face of *God's yearth*. '—His name is Captain Tomlinson, 'Sir.'

'I don't know such a one.'

'I believe not, Sir. He was pleased 'to say, He don't know your honour, 'Sir; but I heard him say as how he 'should not be an unwelcome visitor to 'you for all that.'

'Do you know such a man as Cap-'tain Tomlinson, my dearest life,' [*Aside*] 'your uncle's friend?'

'No; but my uncle may have ac-'quaintance, no doubt, that I don't 'know.—But I hope [Trembling] 'this is not a trick.'

'Well, friend, if your master has 'any-thing to say to Mr. Lovelace, 'you may tell him, that Mr. Love-'lace is here; and will see him when-'ever he pleases.'

The dear creature looked as if afraid that my engagement was too prompt for my own safety; and away went the fellow—*I wondering, that she might not wonder*, that this Captain Tomlinson, whoever he were, came not himself, or sent not a letter the second time, when he had reason to suppose that I might be here.

Mean time, for fear that this should be a contrivance of James Harlowe, who, I said, loved plotting, though he had not a head turned for it, I gave some precautionary directions to the servants, and the women, whom, for the greater parade, I assembled before us: and my beloved was resolved *not to stir abroad till she saw the issue of this odd affair*.

And

And here muſt I cloſe, *though in ſo great a puzzle.*

Only let me add, that poor Belton wants thee; for I dare not ſtir for my life.

Mowbray and Tourville ſkulk about like vagabonds, without heads, without hands, without ſouls; having neither you nor me to conduct them. They tell me, they ſhall ruſt beyond the power of oil or action to brighten them up, or give them motion.

How goes it with thy uncle?

LETTER XLVIII.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

SUNDAY, MAY 28.

THIS ſtory of Captain Tomlinſon employed us not only for the time we were together laſt night, but all the while we ſat at breakfaſt this morning. She would ſtill have it, that it was the prelude to ſome miſchief from Singleton. I inſiſted, (according to my former hint) that it might much more probably be a method taken by Colonel Morden to alarm her, previous to a perſonal viſit. Travelled gentlemen affected to ſurprize in this manner.

'And why, deareſt creature,' ſaid I, 'muſt every-thing that happens, which 'we cannot immediately account for, 'be what we leaſt wiſh?'

She had had ſo many diſagreeable things befal her of late, that her fears were too often ſtronger than her hopes.

'And this, Madam, makes me apprehenſive,' that you will get into ſo 'low-ſpirited a way, that you will not 'be able to enjoy the happineſs that 'ſeems to await us.'

Her duty and her gratitude, ſhe gravely ſaid, to the Diſpenſer of all good, would ſecure her, ſhe hoped, againſt all unthankfulneſs. And a thankful ſpirit was the ſame as a joyful one.

So, Belford, for all her future joys ſhe depends entirely upon the Inviſible Good. She is certainly right; ſince thoſe who fix leaſt upon ſecond cauſes are the leaſt likely to be diſappointed—And is not this gravity for her gravity?

She had hardly done ſpeaking, when Dorcas came running up in a hurry—She ſet even *my* heart into a palpitation—Thump, thump, thump, like a precipitated pendulum in a clock-caſe—Flutter, flutter, flutter, my charmer's, as by her ſweet boſom riſing to her chin I ſaw.

This lower claſs of people, my beloved herſelf obſerved, were for ever aiming at the *ſtupid wonderful*, and for making even common incidents matter of ſurprize.

'Why the devil,' ſaid I to the wench, 'this alarming hurry?—And with 'your ſpread fingers, and your O Ma-'dams, and O Sirs!—and be curs'd 'to you! Would there have been a ſe-'cond of time difference, had you come 'up ſlowly?'

'Captain Tomlinſon, Sir!'

'Captain Devilſon, what care I?—'Do you ſee how you have diſordered 'your lady?'

'Good Mr. Lovelace,' ſaid my charmer trembling, [See, Jack, when ſhe has an end to ſerve, I am *good* Mr. Lovelace] 'if—if my brother—if 'Captain Singleton ſhould appear—'Pray now—I beſeech you—Let me 'beg of you—to govern your temper—'My brother is my brother—Captain 'Singleton is but an *agent*.'

'My deareſt life,' folding my arms about her, ['When ſhe aſks favours,' thought I, 'the devil's in it, if ſhe 'will not allow of ſuch innocent free-'dom as this, from *good* Mr. Lovelace 'too] 'you ſhall be witneſs of all that 'paſſes between us.—Dorcas, deſire 'the gentleman to walk up.'

'Let me retire to my chamber firſt! '—Let me not be known to be in the 'houſe!'

Charming dear!—Thou ſeeſt, Belford, ſhe is afraid of leaving me!—O the little witchcrafts! Were it not for ſurprizes now-and-then, how would an honeſt man know where to have them?

She withdrew to liſten—And though this incident has not turned out to anſwer *all I wiſhed from it*, yet is it neceſſary, if I would acquaint thee with my *whole circulation*, to be very particular in what paſſed between Captain Tomlinſon and me.

Enter Captain Tomlinſon in a riding-dreſs, whip in hand.

'Your ſervant, Sir—Mr. Lovelace, 'I preſume?'

'My

'My name is Lovelace, Sir.'

'Excuse the day, Sir.—Be pleased 'to excuse my garb. I am obliged to 'go out of town directly, that I may 'return at night.'

'The day is a good day. Your 'garb needs no apology.'

'When I sent my servant, I did not '*know that I should find time to do my-*'*self this honour.* All that I thought 'I could do to oblige my friend this 'journey, was *only* to assure myself of 'your abode; and whether there were 'a probability of being admitted to 'the speech either of you, or your 'lady.'

'Sir, you best know your own mo-'tives. What your time will permit 'you to do, you also best know. And 'here I am, attending your pleasure.'

My charmer owned afterwards her concern on my being so short. Whatever I shall mingle of her emotions, thou wilt easily guess I had afterwards.

'Sir, I hope no offence. I intend 'none.'

'None—None at all, Sir.'

'Sir, I have no interest in the affair 'I come about. I may appear offi-'cious; and if I thought I should, I 'would decline any concern in it, af-'ter I have just hinted what it is.'

'And pray, Sir, what is it?'

'May I ask you, Sir, without of-'fence, whether you wish to be recon-'ciled, and to co-operate upon ho-'nourable terms, with *one* gentleman 'of the name of Harlowe; prepara-'tive, as it may be hoped, to a gene-'ral reconciliation?'

'*O how my heart fluttered!*' cried my charmer.

'I can't tell, Sir:'—[*And then it fluttered still more, no doubt*] 'the 'whole family have used me extremely 'ill. They have taken greater liber-'ties with my character than are justi-'fiable; and with my family *too*; 'which I can less forgive.'

'Sir, Sir, I have done. I beg par-'don for this intrusion.'

My beloved was then ready to sink, and thought very hardly of me.

'But, pray, Sir, to the immediate 'purpose of your present commission; 'since a commission it seems to be?'

'It is a commission, Sir; and such a 'one, as I thought would be agreeable 'to all parties, or I should not have 'given myself concern about it.'

'Perhaps it *may*, Sir, when known. 'But let me ask you one previous 'question; Do you know Colonel 'Morden, Sir?'

'No, Sir. If you mean *personally*, 'I do not. But I have heard my good 'friend Mr. John Harlowe talk of him 'with great respect; and as a co-trus-'tee with him in a certain trust.'

Lovel. 'I thought it probable, Sir, 'that the colonel might be arrived; 'that you might be a gentleman of his 'acquaintance; and that something of 'an agreeable surprize might be in-'tended.'

Capt. 'Had Colonel Morden been 'in England, Mr. John Harlowe would 'have known it; and then I should not 'have been a stranger to it.'

Lovel. 'Well, but, Sir, have you 'then any commission to me from Mr. 'John Harlowe?'

Capt. 'Sir, I will tell you, as briefly 'as I can, the whole of what I have to 'say; but you'll excuse *me* also a pre-'vious question, for which curiosity is 'not my motive; but it is necessary to 'be answered before I can proceed; as 'you will judge when you hear it.'

Lovel. 'What, pray, Sir, is your 'question?'

Capt. 'Briefly, Whether you are ac-'tually, and *bona fide*, married to Miss 'Clarissa Harlowe?'

I started, and, in a haughty tone, 'Is 'this, Sir, a question that *must* be an-'swered before you can proceed in the 'business you have undertaken?'

'I mean no offence, Mr. Lovelace. 'Mr. Harlowe sought to me to under-'take this office. I have daughters and 'nieces of my own. I thought it a 'good office, or I, who have many con-'siderable affairs upon my hands, had 'not accepted of it. I know the world; 'and will take the liberty to say, That 'if that young lady——'

'Captain Tomlinson, I think, you 'are called?'

'My name is Tomlinson.'

'Why then, Captain Tomlinson, 'no *liberty*, as you call it, will be taken 'well, that is not extremely delicate, 'when that lady is mentioned.'

'When you had heard me out, Mr. 'Lovelace, and had found, I had so 'behaved, as to make the caution ne-

'ceſſary, it would have been juſt to 'have given it.—Allow me to ſay, I 'know what is due to the character of 'a woman of virtue, as well as any 'man alive.'

'Why, Sir! Why, Captain Tomlinſon, you ſeem warm. If you intend any-thing by this,' ['*O how I trembled!*' ſaid the lady, *when ſhe took notice of this part of our converſation afterwards*] 'I will only ſay, that 'this is a privileged place. It is at 'preſent my home, and an aſylum for 'any gentleman who thinks it worth 'his while to enquire after me, be the 'manner or end of his enquiry what it 'will.'

'I know not, Sir, that I have given 'occaſion for this. I make no ſcruple 'to attend you *elſewhere*, if I am troubleſome here. I was told, I had a 'warm young gentleman to deal with: 'but as I knew my intention, and that 'my commiſſion was an amicable one, 'I was the leſs concerned about that. 'I am twice your age, Mr. Lovelace, 'I dare ſay: but I do aſſure you, that 'if either my meſſage, or my manner, 'give you offence, I can ſuſpend the 'one or the other for a day, or for ever, 'as you like. And ſo, Sir, any time 'before eight to-morrow morning, you 'will let me know your further commands.'—And was going to tell me where he might be found.

'Captain Tomlinſon,' ſaid I, 'you 'anſwer well. I love a man of ſpirit. 'Have you not been in the army?'

'I have, Sir; but have *turned my 'ſword into a plough-ſhare*, as the 'Scripture has it.' [*There was a clever fellow, Jack!—He was a good man with ſomebody, I warrant!* O what a fine coat and cloak for an hypocrite will a text of Scripture, properly applied, make at any time in the eye of the pious!—How eaſily are the good folks taken in!]—'And all my delight,' added he, 'for ſome years paſt, has 'been in cultivating my paternal eſtate. 'I love a brave man, Mr. Lovelace, as 'well as ever I did in my life. But 'let me tell you, Sir, that when you 'come to my time of life, you will be 'of opinion, that there is not ſo much 'true bravery in youthful choler, as 'you may now think there is.'

A clever fellow again, Belford!—Ear and heart, both at once, he took in my charmer!—'*'Tis well*,' ſhe ſays, '*there are ſome men who have wiſdom 'in their anger*.'

'Well, captain, that is reproof for 'reproof. So we are upon a foot. And 'now give me the pleaſure of hearing 'the import of your commiſſion.'

'Sir, you muſt firſt allow me to repeat my queſtion: are you really, and *bona fida*, married to Miſs Clariſſa 'Harlowe? Or are you not yet married?'

'Bluntly put, captain. But if I anſwer that I *am*, what then?'

'Why then, Sir, I ſhall ſay, that you 'are a man of honour.'

'That I hope I am, whether *you* ſay 'it or not, Captain Tomlinſon.'

'Sir, I will be very frank in all I 'have to ſay on this ſubject—Mr. John 'Harlowe has lately found out, that 'you and his niece are both in the 'ſame lodgings; that you have been 'long ſo; and that the lady was at the 'play with you yeſterday ſe'ennight; and he hopes that you are actually married. He has indeed heard 'that you *are*; but as he knows your 'enterprizing temper, and that you 'have declared, that you diſdain a relation to their family, he is willing 'by me to have your marriage confirmed from your own mouth, before 'he take the ſteps he is inclined to 'take in his niece's favour. You will 'allow me to ſay, Mr. Lovelace, that 'he will not be ſatisfied with an anſwer 'that admits of the leaſt doubt.'

'Let me tell you, Captain Tomlinſon, that it is a high degree of vileneſs for any man to ſuppoſe—'

'Sir—Mr. Lovelace—don't put 'yourſelf into a paſſion. The lady's 'relations are jealous of the honour of 'their family. They have prejudices 'to overcome as well as you—Advantage may have been taken—and the 'lady, at the *time*, not to blame.'

'This lady, Sir, could give no ſuch 'advantages: and if ſhe *had*, what 'muſt the *man* be, Captain Tomlinſon, who could have taken them?—'Do you know the lady, Sir?'

'I never had the honour to ſee her 'but once: and that was at church; 'and ſhould not know her again.'

'Not know her again, Sir!—I thought 'there was not a man living who had 'once ſeen her, and would not know 'her among a thouſand.'

'I remember, Sir, that I thought I 'neve

'never saw a finer woman in my life. But, Mr. Lovelace, I believe, you 'will allow, that it is better that her 'relations should have wronged *you*, 'than you the *lady*. I hope, Sir, you 'will permit me to repeat my ques- 'tion?'

Enter Dorcas, in a hurry.

'A *gentleman*, this minute, Sir, de- 'sires to speak with your honour.— '[*My lady, Sir!*'—*Aside.*]

Could the dear creature put *Dorcas* upon telling this fib, yet want to save *me* one?

'Desire the gentleman to walk into 'one of the parlours. I will wait on 'him presently.'

[*Exit Dorcas.*

The dear creature, I doubted not, wanted to instruct me how to answer the captain's home-put. I knew how I intended to answer it—Plumb, thou mayest be sure—But Dorcas's message staggered me. And yet I was upon one of my master-strokes—Which was, To take advantage of the captain's enquiries, and to make her *own her marriage before him*, as she had done to the people below; and if she had been brought to that, to induce her, for her uncle's satisfaction, to write him a letter of gratitude; which of course must have been signed '*Clarissa Lovelace.*' I was loth, therefore, thou mayest believe, to attend her sudden commands: and yet, afraid of pushing matters beyond recovery with her, I thought proper to lead him from the question, to account for himself, and for Mr. Harlowe's coming at the knowledge of where we are; and for other particulars which I knew would engage her attention; and which might possibly convince her of the necessity there was for her to acquiesce in the affirmative I was disposed to give. And this for her own sake; for what, as I asked her afterwards, is it to me, whether I am ever reconciled to her family?—A family, Jack, which I must for ever despise.

'You think, captain, that I have an- 'swered doubtfully to the question you 'put. You *may* think so. And you 'must know, that I have a good deal 'of pride; and, only that you are a 'gentleman, and seem in this affair to 'be governed by generous motives, or 'I should ill brook being interrogated 'as to my honour to a lady so dear to 'me.—But before I answer more di- 'rectly to the point, pray satisfy me 'in a question or two that I shall put 'to *you*.'

'With all my heart, Sir. Ask me 'what questions you please, I will an- 'swer them with sincerity and can- 'dour.'

'You say, Mr. Harlowe has found 'out that we were at a play together: 'and that we were both in the same 'lodgings—How, pray, came he at his 'knowledge?—For, let me tell you, 'that I have for certain considerations '(not respecting myself, I will assure 'you) condescended, that our abode 'should be kept secret. And this has 'been so strictly observed, that even 'Miss Howe, though she and my be- 'loved correspond, knows not directly 'whither to send to us.'

'Why, Sir, the person who saw you 'at the play, was a tenant of Mr. John 'Harlowe. He watched all your mo- 'tions. When the play was done, he 'followed your coach to your lodg- 'ings. And early the next day, Sun- 'day, he took horse, and acquainted 'his landlord with what he had ob- 'served.'

Love. 'How oddly things come 'about!—But does any other of the 'Harlowes know where we are?'

Capt. 'It is an absolute secret to 'every other person of the family; and 'so it is intended to be kept: as also 'that Mr. John Harlowe is willing to 'enter into treaty with you, by me, if 'his niece *be actually married*; for 'perhaps he is aware, that he shall have 'difficulty enough with some people to 'bring about the desirable reconcilia- 'tion, although he could give them 'this assurance.'

'I doubt it not, captain—To James 'Harlowe is all the family-folly ow- 'ing.—Fine fools!' [*heroically stalk- ing about*] 'to be governed by one to 'whom malice, and not genius, gives 'the busy livelineſs that distinguishes 'him from a natural!—But how long, 'pray, Sir, has Mr. John Harlowe been 'in the pacifick disposition?'

'I will tell you, Mr. Lovelace, and 'the occasion; and be very explicit 'upon it, and upon all that concerns 'you to know of me, and of the com- 'mission I have undertaken to execute; 'and this the rather, as when you have

'heard me out, you will be satisfied, 'that I am not an officious man in this 'my present address to you.'

'I am all attention, Captain Tomlinson.'

And so I doubt not was my beloved.

Capt. 'You must know, Sir, that I 'have not been *many months* in Mr. 'John Harlowe's neighbourhood. I 'removed from Northamptonshire, 'partly for the sake of better managing one of two executorships, which 'I could not avoid engaging in, (the 'affairs of which frequently call me to 'town, and are part of my present 'business;) and partly for the sake of 'occupying a neglected farm, which 'has *lately* fallen into my hands. But 'though an acquaintance of no longer 'standing, and that commencing on 'the bowling-green,' [*Uncle John is a great bowler, Belford*] '(upon my 'decision of a point to every-one's 'satisfaction, which was appealed to 'me by all the gentlemen; and which 'might have been attended with bad 'consequences) no two brothers have 'a more cordial esteem for each other. 'You know, Mr. Lovelace, that there 'is a *consent*, as I may call it, in some 'minds, which will unite them stronger 'together in a few hours, than years 'can do with others, whom yet we see 'not with disgust.'

Lovel. 'Very true, captain.'

Capt. 'It was on the foot of this 'avowed friendship on both sides, that 'on Monday the 15th, as I very well 'remember, Mr. Harlowe invited him'self home with me. And when there, 'he acquainted me with the whole of 'the unhappy affair that had made 'them all so uneasy. Till then I knew 'it only by report; for, intimate as 'we were, I forbore to speak of what 'was so near his heart, till he began 'first. And then he told me, that he 'had had an application made to him, 'two or three days before, by a gen'tleman whom he named*, to induce 'him not only to be reconciled himself 'to his niece, but to forward for her a 'general reconciliation.

'A like application, he told me, 'had been made to his sister Harlowe, 'by a good woman whom every-body 'respected; who had intimated, that 'his niece, if encouraged, would again 'put herself into the protection of her 'friends, *and leave you:* but if not, 'that *she must unavoidably be yours.*

'I hope, Mr. Lovelace, I make no 'mischief.—You look concerned—'You sigh, Sir.'

'Proceed, Captain Tomlinson. Pray 'proceed.'—*And I sighed still more profoundly.*

Capt. 'They all thought it extreme'ly particular, that a lady should de'cline marriage with a man she had so 'lately gone away with.'

'Pray, captain—*Pray*, Mr. Tom'linson—Nor more of this subject. 'My beloved is an angel. In every'thing unblameable. Whatever faults 'there have been, have been *theirs* and '*mine*. What you would further say, 'is, that the *unforgiving* family re'jected her application. They did. She 'and I had had a misunderstanding. '*The falling out of lovers*—you know, 'captain.—We have been happier ever 'since.'

Capt. 'Well, Sir; but Mr. John 'Harlowe could not but better consider 'the matter *afterwards*. And he de'sired my advice how to act in it. He 'told me that no father ever loved a 'daughter as he loved this niece of 'his; whom, indeed, he used to call 'his *daughter-niece*. He said, she had 'really been unkindly treated by her 'brother and sister: and as your al'liance, Sir, was far from being a dis'credit to their family, he would do 'his endeavour to reconcile all parties, 'if he could be sure that ye were ac'tually man and wife.'

Lovel. 'And what, pray, captain, 'was your advice?'

Capt. 'I gave it as my opinion, that 'if his niece were unworthily treated, 'and in distress, (as he apprehended 'from the application to him) he would 'soon hear of her again: but that it 'was likely, that this application was 'made without *expecting* it would suc'ceed; and as a salvo only, to herself, 'for marrying without their consent. 'And the rather thought I so, as he 'had told me, that it came from a 'young lady her friend, and not in a 'direct way *from herself*; which young 'lady was no favourite of the family; 'and therefore would hardly have been 'employed, had success been expected.'

* See Miss Howe's letters, Page 477, 486.

Lovel.

Lovel. 'Very well, Captain Tomlinson—Pray proceed.'

Capt. 'Here the matter refted till laft Sunday evening, when Mr. John Harlowe came to me with the man who had feen you and your lady (as I preſume ſhe is) at the play; and who had aſſured him, that you both lodged in the ſame houſe.—And then the application having been ſo lately made, which implied, that you were not then married, he was ſo uneaſy for his niece's honour, that I adviſed him to diſpatch to town ſome one in whom he could confide, to make proper enquiries.'

Lovel. 'Very well, captain—And was ſuch a perſon employed on ſuch an errand by her uncle?'

Capt. 'A truſty and diſcreet perſon was accordingly ſent; and laſt Tueſday, I think it was, (for he returned to us on the Wedneſday) he made the enquiries among the neighbours firſt.' [*The very enquiry, Jack, that gave us all ſo much uneaſineſs* *.] 'But finding that none of them could give any ſatisfactory account, the lady's woman was come at, who declared, that you were actually married. But the enquiriſt keeping himſelf on the reſerve as to his employers, the girl refuſed to tell the day, or to give him other particulars.'

Lovel. 'You give a very clear account of every thing, Captain Tomlinſon. Pray proceed.'

Capt. 'The gentleman returned; and on his report Mr. Harlowe, having ſtill doubts, and being willing to proceed on ſome grounds in ſo important a point, beſought me (as my affairs called me frequently to town) to undertake this matter. "You, "Mr. Tomlinſon," he was pleaſed to ſay, "have children of your own: "you know the world: you know "what I drive at: you will proceed, I "am ſure, with underſtanding and "ſpirit: and whatever you are ſatisfied with, ſhall ſatisfy me."

Enter Dorcas again in a hurry.

'Sir, the gentleman is impatient.'

'I will attend him preſently.'

The captain then accounted for his not calling in perſon, when he had reaſon to think us here.

He ſaid he had buſineſs of conſequence a few miles out of town, whither he thought he muſt have gone yeſterday, and having been obliged to put off his little journey till this day, and underſtanding that we were within, not knowing whether he ſhould have ſuch another opportunity, he was willing to try his good fortune before he ſet out; and this made him come booted and ſpurred, as I ſaw him.

He dropped a hint in commendation of the people of the houſe; but it was in ſuch a way, as to give no room to ſuſpect that he thought it *neceſſary* to enquire after the character of perſons who make ſo genteel an appearance, as he obſerved they do.

And here let me remark, that my beloved might collect another circumſtance in favour of the people below, had ſhe doubted their characters, from the ſilence of her uncle's enquiriſt on Tueſday among the neighbours.

Capt. 'And now, Sir, that I believe I have ſatisfied you in every thing relating to my commiſſion, I hope, you will permit me to repeat my queſtion—which is—'

Enter Dorcas again, out of breath.

'Sir, the gentleman will ſtep up to *you.* [*My lady is impatient. She wonders at your honour's delay.' Aſide.*]

'Excuſe me, captain, for one moment.'

'I have ſtaid my full time, Mr. Lovelace. What may reſult from my queſtion and your anſwer, whatever it ſhall be, may take us up time.—And you are engaged. Will you permit me to attend you in the morning, before I ſet out on my return?'

'You will then breakfaſt with me, captain?'

'It muſt be early if I do. I muſt reach my own houſe to-morrow night, or I ſhall make the beſt of wives unhappy. And I have two or three places to call at in my way.'

'It ſhall be by ſeven o'clock, if you pleaſe, captain. We are early folks. And this I will tell you, that if ever I am reconciled to a family ſo implacable as I have always found the Harlowe's to be, it muſt be by the mediation of ſo cool and ſo moderate a gentleman as yourſelf.'

* See Page 553.

And

And so, with the highest civilities on both sides, we parted. But for the private satisfaction of so good a man, I left him out of doubt that we were man and wife, though I did not directly aver it.

LETTER XLIX.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

SUNDAY NIGHT.

THIS Captain Tomlinson is one of the happiest as well as one of the best men in the world. What would I give to stand as high in my beloved's opinion as he does! But yet I am as good a man as he, were I to tell my own story, and have equal credit given to it. But the devil should have had him before I had seen him on the account he came upon, had I thought I should not have answered my principal end in it. I hinted to thee in my last what that was.

But to the particulars of the conference between my fair-one and me, on her hasty messages; which I was loth to come to, because she has had an half triumph over me in it.

After I had attended the captain down to the very passage, I returned to the dining-room, and put on a joyful air, on my beloved's entrance into it—'O my dearest creature,' said I, 'let 'me congratulate you on a prospect so 'agreeable to your wishes!' And I snatched her hand, and smothered it with kisses.

I was going on; when interrupting me, 'You see, Mr. Lovelace,' said she, 'how you have embarrassed yourself, 'by your obliquities! You see, that 'you have not been able to return a direct answer to a plain and honest question, though upon it depends all the 'happiness on the prospect of which 'you congratulate me.'

'You know, my best love, what 'my prudent, and I will say, my *kind* 'motives were, for giving out that we 'were married. You see, that I have 'taken no advantage of it; and that 'no inconvenience has followed it. 'You see that your uncle wants only 'to be assured from ourselves, *that it is* '*so*——'

'Not another word on this subject, 'Mr. Lovelace. I will not only risque, 'but I will forfeit, the reconciliation 'so near my heart, rather than I will 'go on to countenance a story so untrue!'

'My dearest soul—Would you have 'me appear—'

'I would have you appear, Sir, as '*you are!* I am resolved that I will appear to my uncle's friend, and to my 'uncle, as I *am*.'

'For one week, my dearest life! Cannot you for one week—only till the 'settlements—'

'Not for one hour, with my own 'consent. You don't know, Sir, how 'much I have been afflicted, that I 'have appeared to the people below 'what I am not. But my uncle, Sir, 'shall never have it to upbraid me, nor 'will I to upbraid myself, that I have 'wilfully passed upon him in false 'lights.'

'What, my dear, would you have 'me say to the captain to-morrow 'morning? I have given him room to 'think—'

'Then put him right, Mr. Lovelace. Tell the truth. Tell him what 'you please of the favour of your relations to me: tell him what you will 'about the settlements: and if, when 'drawn, you will submit them to his 'perusal and approbation, it will shew 'him how much you are in earnest.'

'My dearest life!—Do you think, 'that he would disapprove of the terms 'I have offered?'

'No.'

'Then may I be accursed, if I willingly submit to be trampled under-'foot by my enemies!'

'And may I, Mr. Lovelace, never 'be happy in this life, if I submit to 'the passing upon my uncle Harlowe a 'wilful and premeditated falsehood for 'truth! I have too long laboured under the affliction which the rejection 'of all my friends has given me, to 'purchase my reconciliation with them 'now at so dear a price as that of my 'veracity.'

'The women below, my dear—'

'What are the women below to me? 'I want not to establish myself with 'them. Need they know all that 'passes between my relations and you 'and me?'

'Neither are they any-thing to me, 'Madam. Only, that when, for the

'sake

'sake of preventing the fatal mischiefs 'which might have attended your brother's projects, I have made them 'think us married, I would not appear 'to them in a light which you yourself think so shocking. By my soul, 'Madam, I had rather die, than contradict myself so flagrantly, after I 'have related to them so many circumstances of our marriage.'

'Well, Sir, the women may believe what they please. That I have 'given countenance to what you told 'them, is my error. The many circumstances which you own *one* untruth has drawn you in to relate, is 'a justification of my refusal in the 'present case.'

'Don't you see, Madam, that your 'uncle wishes to find that we are married? May not the ceremony be privately over, before his mediation can 'take place?'

'Urge this point no farther, Mr. 'Lovelace. If *you* will not tell the 'truth, *I* will to-morrow morning (if 'I see Captain Tomlinson) tell it myself. Indeed I will.'

'Will you, Madam, consent that 'things pass as before with the people 'below? This mediation of Tomlinson *may* come to nothing. Your 'brother's schemes *may* be pursued; 'the rather, that now he will know '(perhaps from your uncle) that you 'are not under a legal protection.—'You will, at least, consent, that things 'pass *here* as before?'

'To permit this, is to go on in an 'error, Mr. Lovelace. But as the occasion for so doing (if there *can* be in 'your opinion an occasion that will 'warrant an untruth) will, as I presume, soon be over, I shall the less 'dispute that point with you. But a 'new error I will not be guilty of, if 'I can avoid it.'

'Can I, do you think, Madam, 'have any dishonourable view in the 'step I supposed you would not scruple 'to take towards a reconciliation with 'your own family? Not for *my own* 'sake, you know, did I wish you to take 'it; for what is it to me, if I am never 'reconciled to your family? I want no 'favours from them.'

'I hope, Mr. Lovelace, there is no 'occasion, in our present *not* disagreeable situation, to answer such a question. And let me say, that I shall 'think my prospects still more agreeable, if, to-morrow morning, you 'will not only own the very truth, but 'give my uncle's friend such an account of the steps you have taken, 'and are taking, as may keep up my 'uncle's favourable intentions towards 'me. This you may do under what 'restrictions of secrecy you please. 'Captain Tomlinson is a prudent man; 'a promoter of family-peace, you 'find; and, I dare say, may be made 'a friend.'

I saw there was no help. I saw that the inflexible Harlowe spirit was all up in her.—A little witch!—A little—Forgive me, Love, for calling her names!—And so I said, with an air, 'We have had too many misunderstandings, Madam, for me to wish 'for new ones: I will obey you without reserve. Had I not thought I 'should have obliged you by the other 'method, (especially as the ceremony 'might have been over, before anything could have operated from your 'uncle's intentions, and of consequence no untruth persisted in) I 'would not have proposed it. But 'think not, my beloved creature, that 'you shall enjoy, without condition, 'this triumph over my judgment.'

And then, clasping my arms about her, I gave her averted cheek (her charming lip designed) a fervent kiss. —'And your forgiveness of this sweet 'freedom,' [Bowing] 'is that condition.'

She was not mortally offended. And now must I make out the rest as well as I can. But this I will tell thee, that although her triumph has not diminished my love for her; yet it has stimulated me more than ever to *revenge*, as thou wilt be apt to call it. But *victory* or *conquest* is the more proper word.

There is a pleasure, 'tis true, in subduing one of these watchful beauties. But, by my soul, Belford, men of our cast take twenty times the pains to be rogues, that it would cost them to be honest; and dearly, with the sweat of our brows, and to the puzzling of our brains, (to say nothing of the hazards we run) do we earn our purchase; and ought not therefore to be grudged our success when we meet with it—Especially as, when we have obtained our end, satiety soon follows; and leaves us little or nothing to shew for it. But this,

this, indeed, may be said of all worldly delights.—And is not that a grave reflection from me?

I was willing to write up to the time. Although I have not carried my principal point, I shall make something turn out in my favour from Captain Tomlinson's errand. But let me give thee this caution; that thou do not pretend to judge of my devices by *parts*; but have patience till thou seest the *whole*. But once more I swear, that I will not be *out-Norris'd* by a pair of novices. And yet I am very apprehensive at times, of the consequences of Miss Howe's smuggling scheme.

My conscience, I should think, ought not to reproach me for a contrivance, which is justified by the contrivances of two such girls as these: one of whom (the more excellent of the two) I have always, with her own approbation as I imagine, proposed for my imitation.

But here, Jack, is the thing that concludes me, and cases my heart with adamant: I find by Miss Howe's letters, that it is owing to *her*, that I have made no greater progress with my blooming fair-one. She loves me. The ipecacuanha contrivance convinces me, that she loves me. Where there is love, there must be confidence, or a desire of having *reason* to confide. Generosity founded on my supposed generosity, has taken hold of her heart. Shall I not now see (since I must be for ever unhappy, if I marry her, and leave any trial unessayed) what I can make of her love, and her newly-raised confidence?—Will it not be to my glory to succeed? And to hers and to the honour of her sex, if I cannot?—Where then will be the hurt to either, to make the trial? And cannot I, as I have often said, reward her when I will by marriage?

'Tis late, or rather early; for the day begins to dawn upon me. I am plaguy heavy. Perhaps I need not to have told thee that. But will only indulge a doze in my chair for an hour; then shake myself, wash and refresh. At my time of life, with such a constitution as I am blessed with, that's all that's wanted.

Good night to me!—It cannot be broad day till I am awake.—Aw-w-w-whaugh—Pox of this yawning!

Is not thy uncle dead yet?

What's come to mine, that he writes not to my last?—Hunting after more *wisdom of nations*, I suppose?—Yaw-yaw-yawning again!—Pen, be gone!

LETTER L.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

MONDAY, MAY 29.

NOW have I established myself for ever in my charmer's heart.

The captain came at seven, as promised, and ready equipped for his journey. My beloved chose not to give us her company till our first conversation was over—Ashamed, I suppose, to be present at that part of it, which was to restore her to her *virgin state* by my confession, after her *wifehood* had been reported to her uncle. But she took her cue nevertheless, and listened to all that passed.

The modestest women, Jack, must *think*, and think deeply sometimes. I wonder whether they ever blush at those things by themselves, at which they have so charming a knack of blushing in company. If not; and if blushing be a sign of grace or modesty; have not the sex as great a command over their blushes, as they are said to have over their tears? This reflection would lead me a great way into female minds, were I disposed to pursue it.

I told the captain, that I would prevent his question; and accordingly (after I had enjoined the strictest secresy, that no advantage might be given to James Harlowe; and which he answered for as well on Mr. Harlowe's part as his own) I acknowledged nakedly and fairly the whole truth—To wit, That we were not yet married. I gave him hints of the causes of procrastination. Some of them owing to unhappy misunderstandings: but chiefly to the lady's desire of previous reconciliation with her friends; and to a delicacy that had no example.

Less nice ladies than this, Jack, love to have delays, wilful and *studied* delays, *imputed to them* in these cases—Yet are indelicate in their affected delicacy; for do they not thereby tacitly confess, that they expect to be the greatest gainers in wedlock; and that there

there is *self-denial* in the pride they take in delaying?

I told him the reaſon of our paſſing to the people below as married—Yet as under a vow of reſtriction, as to conſummation, which had kept us both to the height, one of *forbearing*, the other of *vigilant* punctilio; even to the denial of thoſe innocent freedoms, which betrothed lovers never ſcruple to allow and to take.

I then communicated to him a copy of my propoſal of ſettlement; the ſubſtance of her written anſwer; the contents of my letter of invitation to Lord M. to be her nuptial-father; and of my lord's generous reply. But ſaid, that having apprehenſions of delay from his infirmities, and my beloved chuſing by all means (and that from principles of *unrequited* duty) a private ſolemnization, I had written to excuſe his lordſhip's preſence; and expected an anſwer every hour.

The ſettlements, I told him, were actually drawing by Counſellor Williams, of whoſe eminence he muſt have heard.

He had.

And of the truth of this he might ſatisfy himſelf before he went out of town.

When theſe were drawn, approved, and engroſſed, nothing, I ſaid, but ſigning, and the nomination of my happy day, would be wanting. I had a pride, I declared, in doing the higheſt juſtice, to ſo beloved a creature, of my own voluntary motion, and without the intervention of a family from whom I had received the greateſt inſults. And this being our preſent ſituation, I was contented that Mr. John Harlowe ſhould ſuſpend his reconciliatory purpoſes, till our marriage were actually ſolemnized.

The captain was highly delighted with all I ſaid: yet owned, that as his dear friend Mr. Harlowe had expreſſed himſelf greatly pleaſed to hear that we were actually married, he could have wiſhed it had been ſo. But, nevertheleſs, he doubted not that all would be well.

He ſaw my reaſons, he ſaid, and approved of them, for making the gentlewomen below [Whom again he *underſtood to be good ſort of people*] believe, that the ceremony had paſſed; which ſo well accounted for what the lady's maid had told Mr. Harlowe's friend. Mr. James Harlowe, he ſaid, had certainly ends to anſwer in keeping open the breach; and *as* certainly *had formed a deſign to get his ſiſter out of my hands*. Wherefore it as much imported his worthy friend to keep this treaty a ſecret, as it did me; at leaſt till he had formed his party, and taken his meaſures. Ill-will and paſſion were dreadful miſrepreſenters. It was amazing to him, that animoſity could be carried ſo high againſt a man capable of views ſo pacifick and ſo honourable, and who had ſhewn ſuch a command of his temper, in this whole tranſaction, as I had done. Generoſity, indeed, in every caſe, where love of ſtratagem and intrigue (I would excuſe him) were not concerned, was a part of my character.

He was proceeding, when breakfaſt being ready, in came the empreſs of my heart, irradiating all around her, as with a glory—A benignity and graciouſneſs in her aſpect, that, though natural to it, had been long baniſhed from it.

Next to proſtration lowly bowed the captain. O how the ſweet creature ſmiled her approbation of him! Reverence from one begets reverence from another. Men are more of monkeys in imitation, than they think themſelves—Involuntarily, in a manner, I bent my knee—'My deareſt life—' and made a very fine ſpeech on preſenting the captain to her. No title, myſelf, to her lip or cheek, 'tis well *he* attempted not either. He was indeed ready to worſhip her—could only touch her charming hand.

'I have told the captain, my dear 'creature—' And then I briefly repeated (as if I had ſuppoſed ſhe had not heard it) all I had told him.

He was aſtoniſhed, that any-body could be diſpleaſed one moment with ſuch an angel. He undertook her cauſe as the higheſt degree of merit to himſelf.

Never, I muſt need ſay, did the angel ſo much *look* the angel. All placid, ſerene, ſmiling, ſelf-aſſured: a more lovely flush than uſual heightening her natural graces, and adding charms, even to radiance, to her charming complexion.

After we had ſeated ourſelves, the

agreeable subject was renewed, as we took our chocolate. How happy should she be in her uncle's restored favour!

The captain engaged for it—No more delays, he hoped, on *her* part! Let the happy day be but *once* over, all would then be right. But was it improper to ask for copies of my proposals, and of her answer, in order to shew them to his dear friend her uncle?

As Mr. Lovelace pleased—O that the dear creature would always say so!

It must be in strict confidence then, I said. But would it not be better to shew her uncle the draught of the settlements, when drawn?

'And will you *be so good*, as to allow of this, Mr. Lovelace?'

There, Belford! We were once *The Quarrelsome*, but now we are *The Polite, Lovers*.

'Indeed, my dear creature, I will, 'if you *desire it*, and if Captain Tomlinson will engage, that Mr. Harlowe 'shall keep them absolutely a secret; 'that I may not be subjected to the ca'vil and controul of any others of a 'family that have used me so very ill.'

'*Now indeed, Sir, you are very 'obliging.*'

Dost think, Jack, that my face did not now also shine?

I held out my hand (first consecrating it with a kiss) for hers. *She condescended to give it me.* I pressed it to my lips: 'You know not, Captain Tomlinson,' (with an air) 'all storms overblown, 'what an happy man—'

'Charming couple!' [His hands lifted up] 'How will my good friend 'rejoice! O that he were present!—You 'know not, Madam, how dear you still 'are to your uncle Harlowe!'

'I am unhappy ever to have dis'obliged him.'

'*Not too much of that, however, 'fairest!*' thought I.

The captain repeated his resolutions of service, and that in so acceptable a manner, that the dear creature wished, that neither he, nor any of his, might ever want a friend of equal benevolence.

Nor any of his, she said; for the captain brought it in, that he had five children living, by one of the best wives and mothers, whose excellent management made him as happy, as if his eight hundred pounds a year (which was all he had to boast of) were two thousand.

Without œconomy, the oraculous lady said, *no* estate was large enough. *With* it, the *least* was not too small.

'Lie still, teazing villain! lie still!'—I was only speaking to my conscience, Jack.

'And let me ask you, Mr. Love'lace,' said the captain; 'yet not so 'much from doubt, as that I may pro'ceed upon sure grounds—are you '*willing* to co-operate with my dear 'friend in a general reconciliation?'

'Let me tell you, Mr. Tomlinson, 'that if it can be distinguished, that my 'readiness to make up with a family, 'of whose generosity I have not had 'reason to think highly, is entirely 'owing to the value I have for this an'gel of a woman, I will not only co'operate with Mr. John Harlowe, as 'you ask; but I will meet Mr. James 'Harlowe, senior, and his lady, *all the 'way*. And furthermore, to make the 'son James and his sister Arabella quite 'easy, I will absolutely disclaim any 'further interest, whether living or 'dying, in any of the three brothers 'estates; contenting myself with what 'my beloved's grandfather has be'queathed to her: for I have reason to 'be abundantly satisfied with my own 'circumstances and prospects—Enough 'rewarded, were she not to bring a 'shilling in dowry, in a woman who 'has a merit superior to all the goods 'of fortune.'--True as the Gospel, Belford!—Why had not this scene a real foundation!

The dear creature, by her eyes, expressed her gratitude, before her lips could utter it. 'O Mr. Lovelace!' said she—'You have infinitely——' And there she stopt.

The captain run over in my praise. He was really affected.

'O that I had not such *a mixture of 'revenge and pride in my love!*' thought I.—But (my old plea) cannot I make her amends at any time? And is not her virtue now in the height of it's probation?—Would she lay aside, like the friends of my uncontending Rosebud, all thoughts of defiance—Would she throw herself upon my mercy, and try me but one fortnight in the life of honour—What then?—*I cannot say, What then.*

Do not despise me, Jack, for my inconsistency—In no two letters perhaps agreeing with myself—Who expects consistency

conſiſtency in men of our character?—But I am mad with love—Fired by revenge—Puzzled with my own devices—My invention is my curſe—My pride my puniſhment—Drawn five or ſix ways at once, can *ſhe* poſſibly be ſo unhappy as *I*?—O why, why, was this woman ſo divinely excellent!—Yet how know I that ſhe is? What have been her trials? Have I had the courage to make a ſingle one upon her *perſon*, though a thouſand upon her *temper*?—Know, I hope, to make her afraid of ever diſobliging me more!

* *

I MUST baniſh reflection, or I am a loſt man. For theſe two hours paſt have I hated myſelf for my own contrivances. And this not only from what I *have* related to thee; but from what I have *further* to relate. But I have now once more ſteeled my heart. My vengeance is uppermoſt; *for I have been re-peruſing ſome of Miſs Howe's virulence.* The contempt they have both held me in, I cannot bear.

The happieſt breakfaſt-time, my beloved owned, that ſhe had ever known *ſince ſhe had left her father's houſe*; [*She might have let this alone.*] The captain renewed all his proteſtations of ſervice. He would write me word how his dear friend received the account he ſhould give him of the happy ſituation of our affairs, and what he thought of the ſettlements, as ſoon as I ſhould ſend him the draughts ſo kindly promiſed. And we parted with great profeſſions of mutual eſteem; my beloved putting up vows for the ſucceſs of his generous mediation.

When I returned from attending the captain down ſtairs, which I did to the outward-door, my beloved met me as I entered the dining-room; complacency reigning in every lovely feature.

'You ſee me already,' *ſaid ſhe*, 'another creature. You know not, Mr. Lovelace, how near my heart this hoped-for reconciliation is. I am now willing to baniſh every diſagreeable remembrance. You know not, Sir, how much you have obliged me. And, Oh, Mr. Lovelace, how happy ſhall I be, when my heart is lightened from the all-ſinking weight of a father's curſe! When my dear mamma—You don't know, Sir, half the excellences of my dear mamma! and what a kind heart ſhe has, when it is left to follow it's own impulſes—When this bleſſed mamma ſhall once more fold me to her indulgent boſom! When I ſhall again have uncles and aunts, and a brother and ſiſter, all ſtriving who ſhall ſhew moſt kindneſs and favour to the poor outcaſt, then *no more* an outcaſt—And you, Mr. Lovelace, to behold all this, and to be received into a family ſo dear to me, with welcome—What though a little cold at firſt? when they come to know you better, and to ſee you oftener; no freſh cauſes of diſguſt occurring, and you, as I hope, having entered upon a new courſe, all will be warmer and warmer love on both ſides, till every-one will perhaps wonder, how they came to ſet themſelves againſt you.'

Then drying her tears with her handkerchief, after a few moments pauſing; on a ſudden, as if recollecting that ſhe had been led by her joy to an expreſſion of it which ſhe had not intended I ſhould ſee, ſhe retired to her chamber with precipitation; leaving me almoſt as unable to ſtand it as herſelf.

In ſhort, I was—I want words to ſay how I was—My noſe had been made to tingle before; my eyes have before been made to gliſten by this ſoul-moving beauty; but, ſo *very* much affected, I never was—for, trying to check my ſenſibility, it was too ſtrong for me, and I even ſobbed—Yes, by my ſoul, I *audibly* ſobbed, and was forced to turn from her before ſhe had well finiſhed her affecting ſpeech.

I want, methinks, now I have owned the odd ſenſation, to deſcribe it to thee—The thing was ſo ſtrange to me—Something choaking, as it were, in my throat—I know not how—Yet, I muſt needs ſay, though I am out of countenance upon the recollection, that there was ſomething very pretty in it; and I wiſh I could know it again, that I might have a more perfect idea of it, and be better able to deſcribe it to thee.

But this effect of her joy on ſuch an occaſion gives me a high notion of what that virtue muſt be, [What other name can I call it?] which in a mind ſo capable of delicate tranſport, ſhould be able to make ſo charming a creature, in her very bloom, all froſt and ſnow to every advance of love from the man ſhe hates not. This muſt be all from education too—Muſt it not, Belford? Can

education have ſtronger force in a woman's heart than *nature?*—Sure it cannot. But if it can, how entirely right are parents to cultivate their daughters minds, and to inſpire them with notions of reſerve and diſtance to our ſex; and indeed to make them think highly of their own! For pride is an excellent ſubſtitute, let me tell thee, where virtue ſhines not out, as the ſun, in it's own unborrowed luſtre.

LETTER LI.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

AND now it is time to confeſs, (and yet I know that thy conjectures are aforehand with my expoſition) that this Captain Tomlinſon, who is ſo great a favourite with my charmer, and who takes ſo much delight in healing breaches, and reconciling differences, is neither a greater man nor a leſs, than honeſt Patrick M'Donald, attended by a diſcarded footman of his own finding out.

Thou knoweſt what a various-lifed raſcal he is; and to what better hopes born and educated. But that ingenious knack of forgery, for which he was expelled the Dublin univerſity, and a detection ſince in evidenceſhip, have been his ruin. For theſe have thrown him from one country to another; and at laſt, into the way of life, which would make him a fit huſband for Miſs Howe's Townſend with her contrabands. He is, thou knoweſt, admirably qualified for any enterprize that requires adroitneſs and ſolemnity. And can there, after all, be a higher piece of juſtice, than to keep one ſmuggler in readineſs to play againſt another?

'Well, but, Lovelace,' (methinks thou queſtioneſt) 'how cameſt thou to 'venture upon ſuch a contrivance as 'this, when, as thou haſt told me, the 'lady uſed to be a month at a time at 'this uncle's; and muſt, therefore, in 'all probability, know, that there was 'not a Captain Tomlinſon in all the 'neighbourhood; at leaſt no one of the 'name ſo intimate with him, as this 'man pretends to be?'

This objection, Jack, is ſo natural a one, that I could not help obſerving to my charmer, that ſhe muſt ſurely have heard her uncle ſpeak of this gentleman. 'No,' ſhe ſaid, ſhe never had. Beſides ſhe had not been at her uncle Harlowe's for near ten months, [*This I had heard her ſay before:*] and there were ſeveral gentlemen who uſed the ſame green, whom ſhe knew not.

We are all very ready, thou knoweſt, to believe what ſhe likes.

And what was the reaſon, thinkeſt thou, that ſhe had not been of ſo long a time at this uncle's?—Why, this old ſinner, who imagines himſelf entitled to call me to account for my freedoms with the ſex, has lately fallen into familiarities, as it is ſuſpected, with his houſekeeper; who aſſumes airs upon it.—A curſed deluding ſex!—In youth, middle-age, or dotage, they take us all in.

Doſt thou not ſee, however, that this houſekeeper knows nothing, nor is to know any-thing, of the treaty of reconciliation deſigned to be ſet on foot; and therefore the uncle always comes to the captain, the captain goes not to the uncle? And this I ſurmiſed to the lady. And then it was a natural ſuggeſtion, that the captain was the rather applied to, as he is a ſtranger to the reſt of the family—Need I tell thee the meaning of all this?

But this intrigue of the *ancient* is a piece of private hiſtory, the truth of which my beloved cares not to own, and indeed affects to diſbelieve: as ſhe does alſo ſome puiſny gallantries of her fooliſh brother; which, by way of recrimination, I have hinted at, without naming my informant in their family.

'Well but,' methinks thou queſtioneſt again, 'is it not probable that 'Miſs Howe will make enquiry after 'ſuch a man as Tomlinſon?—And 'when ſhe cannot——'

I know what thou wouldſt ſay—But I have no doubt, that Wilſon will be ſo good, if I deſire it, as to give into my own hands any letter that may be brought by Collins to his houſe, for a week to come. And now I hope thou art ſatisfied.

I will conclude with a ſhort ſtory.

Two neighbouring ſovereigns were at war together, about ſome pitiful chuck-farthing thing or other; no matter what; *for the leaſt trifles will ſet princes and children at loggerheads.* Their armies had been drawn up in battalia ſome days, and the news of a deciſive

decisive action was expected every hour to arrive at each court. At last, issue was joined; a bloody battle was fought; and a fellow who had been a spectator of it, arriving, with the news of a compleat victory, at the capital of one of the princes some time before the appointed couriers, the bells were set a ringing, bonfires and illuminations were made, and the people went to bed intoxicated with joy and good liquor. But the next day all was reversed: the victorious enemy, pursuing his advantage, was expected every hour at the gates of the almost defenceless capital. The first reporter was hereupon sought for, and found; and being questioned, pleaded a great deal of merit, in that he had, in so dismal a situation, taken such a space of time from the distress of his fellow-citizens, and given it to festivity, as were the hours between the false good news and the real bad.

Do thou, Belford, make the application. This I know, that I have given greater joy to my beloved, than she had thought would so soon fall to her share. And as the human life is properly said to be chequer-work, no doubt but a person of her prudence will make the best of it, and set off so much good against so much bad, in order to strike as just a balance as possible.

The lady, in three several letters, acquaints her friend with the most material passages and conversations contained in those of Mr. Lovelace preceding. These are her words, on relating what the commission of the pretended Tomlinson was, after the apprehensions that his distant enquiry had given her:

'At last, my dear, all these doubts 'and fears were cleared up, and ba-'nished; and, in their place, a delight-'ful prospect was opened to me. For 'it comes happily out, (but at present 'it must be an absolute secret, for rea-'sons which I shall mention in the se-'quel) that the gentleman was sent by 'my uncle Harlowe, [I thought he 'could not be angry with me for ever:] 'all owing to the conversation that 'passed between your good Mr. Hick-'man and him. For although Mr. 'Hickman's application was too harsh-'ly rejected at the time, my uncle could 'not but think better of it afterwards, 'and of the arguments that worthy 'gentleman used in my favour.

'Who, upon a passionate repulse, 'would despair of having a reasonable 'request granted?—Who would not, 'by gentleness and condescension, en-'deavour to leave favourable impres-'sions upon an angry mind; which, 'when it comes coolly to reflect, may 'induce it to work itself into a conde-'scending temper? To request a fa-'vour, as I have often said, is one 'thing; to challenge it as our due, is 'another. And what right has a pe-'titioner to be angry at a *repulse*, if he 'has not a right to *demand* what he 'sues for as a *debt?*'

She describes Captain Tomlinson, on his breakfast visit, to be, a grave good sort of a man. *And in another place,* a genteel man, of great gravity, and a good aspect; she believes upwards of fifty years of age. 'I liked him,' *says she,* 'as 'soon as I saw him.'

As her prospects are now, as she says, more favourable than heretofore, she wishes, that her hopes of Mr. Lovelace's so-often-promised reformation were better grounded than she is afraid they can be.

'We have both been extremely 'puzzled, my dear,' *says she,* 'to re-'concile some parts of Mr. Lovelace's 'character with other parts of it: his 'good with his bad; such of the former 'in particular, as, his generosity to 'his tenants; his bounty to the inn-'keeper's daughter; his readiness to 'put me upon doing kind things by 'my good Norton, and others.

'A strange mixture in his mind, as 'I have told him! For he is certainly '(as I have reason to say, looking back 'upon his past behaviour to me in 'twenty instances) *a hard-hearted man.* 'Indeed, my dear, *I have thought 'more than once, that he had rather see 'me in tears, than give me reason to 'be pleased with him.*

'My cousin Morden says, that free 'livers are remorseless *. And so they 'must be in the very nature of things.

* See page 466. See also Mr. Lovelace's own confession of the delight he takes in a woman's tears, in different parts of his letters.

'Mr.

'Mr. Lovelace is a proud man. We have both long ago obſerved, that he is. And I am truly afraid, that his very generoſity is more owing to his *pride* and his *vanity*, than that *philanthropy* (ſhall I call it?) which diſtinguiſhes a beneficent mind.

'Money he values not, but as a means to ſupport his pride and his independence. And it is eaſy, as I have often thought, for a perſon to part with a *ſecondary* appetite, when, by ſo doing, he can promote or gratify a *firſt*.

'I am afraid, my dear, that there muſt have been ſome fault in his education. His natural bias was not, I fancy, ſufficiently attended to. He was inſtructed, perhaps (as his power was likely to be large) to do good and beneficent actions; but not, I doubt, from *proper motives*.

'If he *had*, his generoſity would not have ſtopt at *pride*, but would have ſtruck into *humanity*; and then would he not have contented himſelf with doing praiſe-worthy things by fits and ſtarts, or, as if relying on the doctrine of merits, he hoped by a good action to atone for a bad one*; but he would have been uniformly noble, and done the good for it's *own* ſake.

'O my dear! what a lot have I drawn! *Pride* this poor man's *virtue*; and *revenge* his other predominating quality!—This one conſolation, however, remains: he is not an infidel, and unbeliever: had he been an *infidel*, there would have been no room at all for hope of him; but (priding himſelf, as he does, in his fertile invention) he would have been utterly abandoned, irreclaimable, and a ſavage.'

When ſhe comes to relate thoſe occaſions, which Mr. Lovelace in his narrative acknowledges himſelf to be affected by, ſhe thus expreſſes herſelf:

'He endeavoured, as once before, to conceal his emotion. But why, my dear, ſhould theſe men (for Mr. Lovelace is not ſingular in this) think themſelves above giving theſe beautiful proofs of a feeling heart? Were it in my power again to chuſe, or to refuſe, I would reject the man with contempt, who ſought to ſuppreſs, or offered to deny, the power of being viſibly affected upon *proper* occaſions, as either a ſavage-hearted creature, or as one who was ſo ignorant of the principal glory of the human nature, as to place his pride in a barbarous inſenſibility.'

'Theſe lines tranſlated from Juvenal by Mr. Tate, I have been often pleaſed with:

"Compaſſion *proper* to *mankind* appears:
"Which Nature witneſs'd, when ſhe lent us
"tears.
"Of tender ſentiments WE only give
"Theſe proofs: to weep is OUR prerogative:
"To ſhew by pitying looks, and melting
"eyes,
"How with a ſuff'ring friend we ſympathize.
"Who can all ſenſe of others ills eſcape,
"Is but a brute at beſt, in human ſhape."

'It cannot but yield me ſome pleaſure, hardly as I have ſometimes thought of the people of the houſe, that ſuch a good man as Captain Tomlinſon had ſpoken well of them, upon enquiry.

'And here I ſtop a minute, my dear, to receive, in fancy, your kind congratulation.

'My next, I hope, will confirm my preſent, and open ſtill more agreeable proſpects. Mean time be aſſured,

* That the lady judges rightly of him in this place, ſee Vol. I. p. 108, 109. where, giving the motive for his generoſity to his Roſebud, he ſays—'As I make it my rule, whenever I have committed a very capital enormity, to do ſome good by way of atonement; and as I believe I am a pretty deal indebted on that ſcore; I intend to join an hundred pounds to Johnny's aunt's hundred pounds, to make one innocent couple happy.'—Beſides which motive, he had a further view to anſwer in that inſtance of his generoſity; as may be ſeen Vol. II. Letters XXV. XXVI. XXVII. See alſo the Note Vol. II. p. 216.

To ſhew the conſiſtence of his actions, as they now appear, with his views and principles, as he lays them down in his *firſt letters*, it may not be amiſs to refer the reader to his Letters, Vol. I. Numb. XXXIV. XXXV.

See alſo Vol. I. p. 90—91.—and p. 125. for Clariſſa's early opinion of Mr. Lovelace.—Whence the coldneſs and indifference to him, which he ſo repeatedly accuſes her of, will be accounted for, more to *her* glory, than to *his* honour.

'that

'that there cannot possibly any good
'fortune befal me, which I shall look
'upon with equal delight to that I have
'in your friendship.

'My thankful compliments to your
'good Mr. Hickman, to whose kind
'intervention I am so much obliged on
'this occasion, conclude me, my dearest
'Miss Howe, *your ever-affectionate*
'*and grateful*

'CL. HARLOWE.'

LETTER LII.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

TUESDAY, MAY 30.

I Have a letter from Lord M. Such an one as I would wish for, if I intended matrimony. But as matters are circumstanced, I cannot think of shewing it to my beloved.

My lord regrets, that he is not to be the lady's nuptial father. He seems apprehensive that I have still, specious as my reasons are, some mischief in my head.

He graciously consents, that I may marry when I please; and offers one or both of my cousins to assist my bride, and to support her spirits on the occasion; since, as he understands, she is so much afraid to venture with me.

Pritchard, he tells me, has his final orders to draw up deeds for assigning over to me in perpetuity 1000*l. per annum*; which he will execute the same hour that the lady in person owns her marriage.

He consents, that the jointure be made from my own estate.

He wishes that the lady would have accepted of his draught; and commends me for tendering it to her. But reproaches me for pride in not keeping it myself. 'What the right side gives up,
'the left,' he says, 'may be the better
'for.'

The girls, the *left-sided* girls, he means.

With all my heart. If I can have my Clarissa, the devil take every-thing else.

A good deal of other stuff writes the stupid peer; scribbling in several places half a dozen lines, apparently for no other reason, but to bring in as many musty words in an old saw.

If thou askest, How I can manage, since my beloved will wonder, that I have not an answer from my lord to such a letter as I wrote to him; and if I own I have one, will expect that I should shew it to her, as I did my letter?—This I answer—That I can be informed by Pritchard, that my lord has the gout in his right-hand; and has ordered him to attend me in form, for my particular orders about the transfer: and I can see Pritchard, thou knowest, at the King's Arms, or wherever I please, *at an hour's warning*; *though he be at M. Hall, I in town*; and he, by word of mouth, can acquaint me with every-thing in my lord's letter *that is necessary for my charmer to know.*

Whenever it suits me, *I can restore the old peer to his right-hand*, and then can make him write a much more sensible letter than this that he has now sent me.

Thou knowest, that an adroitness in the art of *manual imitation*, was one of my earliest attainments. It has been said, on this occasion, that had I been a *bad* man in *meum* and *tuum* matters, I should not have been fit to live. As to the girls, we hold it no sin to cheat them. And are we not told, that in being *well deceived* consists the whole of human happiness?

WEDNESDAY, MAY 31.

ALL still happier and happier. A very high honour done me: a chariot, instead of a coach, permitted, purposely to indulge me in the subject of subjects.

Our discourse in this sweet airing turned upon our future manner of life. The day is bashfully promised me. *Soon* was the answer to my repeated urgency. Our equipage, our servants, our liveries, were parts of the delightful subject. A desire that the wretch who had given me intelligence out of the family (honest Joseph Leman) might not be one of our menials; and her resolution to have her faithful Hannah, whether recovered or not; were signified; and both as readily assented to.

Her wishes, from my attentive behaviour, when with her at St. Paul's*, that I would often accompany her to

* See Vol. III, p. 441.

the

the divine service, were gently intimated, and as readily engaged for. I assured her, that I ever had respected the clergy in a body; and some individuals of them (her Dr. Lewen for one) highly: and that were not going to church an act of religion, I thought it [as I told thee once *] a most agreeable sight to see rich and poor, all of a *company*, as I might say, assembled once a week in one place, and each in his or her best attire, to worship the God that made them. Nor could it be a hardship upon a man liberally educated, to make *one* on so solemn an occasion, and to hear the harangue of a man of letters (though far from being the principal part of the service, as it is too generally looked upon to be) whose studies having taken a different turn from his own, he must always have something new to say.

She shook her head, and repeated the word *new*: but looked as if willing to be satisfied for the present with this answer. To be sure, Jack, she means to do great despight to his Satanick majesty in her hopes of reforming me. No wonder therefore if he exerts himself to prevent her, and to be revenged —But how came this in?—I am ever of party against myself.—One day, I fancy, I shall hate myself on recollecting what I am about at this instant. But I must stay till then. We must all of us do something to repent of.

The reconciliation-prospect was enlarged upon. If her uncle Harlowe will but pave the way to it, and if it can be brought about, she shall be happy.—Happy, with a sigh, *as it is now possible she can be!*

She won't forbear, Jack!

I told her, that I had heard from Pritchard, just before we set out on our airing, and expected him in town tomorrow from Lord M. to take my directions. I spoke with gratitude of my lord's kindness to me; and with pleasure of Lady Sarah's, Lady Betty's, and my two cousins Montagues veneration for her: and also of his lordship's concern that his gout hindered him from writing a reply *with his own hand* to my last.

She pitied my lord. She pitied poor Mrs. Fretchville too; for she had the goodness to enquire after her. The dear creature pitied every-body that seemed to want pity. Happy in her own prospects, she had leisure to look abroad, and wishes every-body equally happy.

It is likely to go very hard with Mrs. Fretchville. Her face, which she had valued herself upon, will be utterly ruined. This good, however, as I could not but observe, she may reap from so great an evil.—As the greater malady generally swallows up the less, she may have a grief on this occasion, that may diminish the other grief, and make it tolerable.

I had a gentle reprimand for this light turn on so heavy an evil—For what was the loss of beauty to the loss of a good husband?—Excellent creature!

Her hopes (and her pleasure upon those hopes) that Miss Howe's mother would be reconciled to her, were also mentioned. *Good* Mrs. Howe was her word, for a woman so covetous, and so remorseless in her covetousness, that no one else will call her *good*. But this dear creature has such an extension in her love, as to be capable of valuing the most insignificant animal related to those whom she respects. 'Love me, 'and love my dog,' I have heard Lord M. say.—Who knows, but that I may in time, in compliment to myself, bring her to think well of *thee*, Jack?

But what am I about? Am I not all this time arraigning my own heart?—I know I am, by the remorse I feel in it, while my pen bears testimony to her excellence. But yet I must add, (for no selfish consideration shall hinder me from doing justice to this admirable creature) that in this conversation she demonstrated so much prudent knowledge in every-thing that relates to that part of the domestick management which falls under the care of a mistress of a family, that I believe she has no equal of her years in the world.

But, indeed, I know not the subject on which she does not talk with admirable distinction; insomuch that could I but get over my prejudices against matrimony, and resolve to walk in the dull beaten path of my ancestors, I should be the happiest of men—And if I cannot, perhaps I may be ten times more to be pitied than she.

* See Vol. III. Page 441.

My

My heart, my heart, Belford, *is not to be truſted*—I break off, to re-peruſe ſome of Miſs Howe's virulence.

* *

CURSED letters, theſe of Miſs Howe, Jack!—Do thou turn back to thoſe of mine, where I take notice of them—I proceed.

Upon the whole, my charmer was all gentleneſs, all eaſe, all ſerenity, throughout this ſweet excurſion. Nor had ſhe reaſon to be otherwiſe: for it being the firſt time that I had the honour of her company alone, I was reſolved to encourage her, by my reſpectfulneſs, to *repeat the favour*.

On our return, I found the counſellor's clerk waiting for me, with a draught of the marriage-ſettlements.

They are drawn, with only the neceſſary variations, from thoſe made for my mother. The original of which, (now returned by the counſellor) as well as the new draughts, I have put into my beloved's hands.

Theſe ſettlements of my mother made the lawyer's work eaſy; nor can ſhe have a better precedent; the great Lord S. having ſettled them, at the requeſt of my mother's relations; all the difference, my charmer's are 100*l*. *per annum* more than my mother's.

I offered to read to her the old deed, while ſhe looked over the draught; for ſhe had refuſed her preſence at the examination with the clerk: but this ſhe alſo declined.

I ſuppoſe ſhe did not care to hear of ſo many children, firſt, ſecond, third, fourth, fifth, ſixth, and ſeventh ſons, and as many daughters, *to be begotten upon the body of the ſaid Clariſſa Harlowe*.

Charming matrimonial recitativoes! —though it is always ſaid *lawfully begotten* too—As if a man could beget children *unlawfully* upon the body of his own wife.—But thinkeſt thou not that theſe arch rogues the lawyers hereby intimate, that a man may have children by his wife *before* marriage?—This muſt be what they mean. Why will theſe ſly fellows put an honeſt man in mind of ſuch rogueries?—But hence, as in numberleſs other inſtances, we ſee, that *law* and *goſpel* are two very different things.

Dorcas, in our abſence, tried to get at the wainſcot-box in the dark cloſet. But it cannot be done without violence. And to run a riſque of conſequence *now*, for mere curioſity-ſake, would be inexcuſable.

Mrs. Sinclair and the nymphs are all of opinion, that I am now ſo much a favourite, and have ſuch a viſible ſhare in her confidence, and even in her affections, that I may do what I will, and plead for excuſe violence of *paſſion*; which, they will have it, makes violence of *action* pardonable with their ſex; as well as an *allowed extenuation* with the *unconcerned of both ſexes*; and they all offer their helping hands. 'Why not?' they ſay: has ſhe not paſſed for my wife before them all?—And is ſhe not in a fine way of being reconciled to her friends? And was not the want of that reconciliation the pretence for poſtponing the conſummation?

They again urge me, ſince it is ſo difficult to make *night* my friend, to an attempt in the *day*. They remind me, that the ſituation of their houſe is ſuch, that no noiſes can be heard out of it; and ridicule me for making it neceſſary for a lady to be undreſſed. *It was not always ſo with me*, poor old man! Sally told me; ſaucily flinging her handkerchief in my face.

LETTER LIII.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

FRIDAY, JUNE 2.

NOtwithſtanding my ſtudied-for politeneſs and complaiſance for ſome days paſt; and though I have wanted courage to throw the maſk quite aſide; yet I have made the dear creature more than once look about her, by the warm, though decent expreſſion of my paſſion. I have brought her to own, that I am *more* than indifferent with her: but as to LOVE, which I preſſed her to acknowledge, *What need of acknowledgments of that ſort, when a woman conſents to marrying?* —And once repulſing me with diſpleaſure, *The proof of true love I was vowing for her, was* RESPECT, *not* FREEDOM. And offering to defend myſelf, ſhe told me, that all the conception ſhe had been able to form of a faulty paſſion, was, that it muſt demonſtrate itſelf as mine ſought to do.

I endeavoured to justify my passion, by laying over-delicacy at her door. Over-delicacy, she said, was not *my* fault, if it were *hers*. She must plainly tell me, that I appeared to her incapable of distinguishing what were the requisites of a pure mind. Perhaps, had the *libertine* presumption to imagine, that there was no difference in *heart*, nor any but what proceeded from difference of *education* and *custom*, between the pure and the impure—And yet custom *alone*, as she observed, if I *did* so think, would make a second nature, as well in *good* as in *bad* habits.

* *

I HAVE just now been called to account for some innocent liberties which I thought myself entitled to take before the women; as they suppose us to be married, and now within view of consummation.

I took the lecture very hardly; and with impatience wished for the happy day and hour when I might call her all my own, and meet with no check from a niceness that had no example.

She looked at me with a bashful kind of contempt. I thought it *contempt*, and required the reason for it; not being conscious of offence, as I told her.

'This is not the first time, Mr. 'Lovelace,' said she, 'that I have had 'cause to be displeased with you, when '*you*, perhaps, have not thought your-'self exceptionable.—But, Sir, let me 'tell you, that the married state, in 'my eye, is a state of purity, and' [I *think* she told me] 'not of *licentious-'ness*;' so, at least, I understood her.

Marriage-purity, Jack!—Very comical, 'faith—Yet, sweet dears, half the female world ready to run away with a rake, *because* he is a rake; and for no *other* reason; nay, every other reason *against* their choice of such a one.

But have not you and I, Belford, seen young wives, who would be thought modest; and when maids, were fantastically shy; permit freedoms in publick from their uxorious husbands, which have shewn, that both of them have forgotten what belongs either to prudence or decency? While every modest eye has sunk under the shameless effrontery, and every modest face been covered with blushes for those who could *not* blush.

I once, upon such an occasion, proposed to a circle of a dozen, thus scandalized, to withdraw; since they must needs see that as well the *lady*, as the gentleman, wanted to be in private. This motion had it's effect upon the amorous pair; and I was applauded for the check given to their licentiousness.

But, upon another occasion of this sort, I acted a little more in character. For I ventured to make an attempt upon a bride, which I should not have had the courage to make, had not the unblushing passiveness with which she received her fond husband's publick toyings, (looking round her with triumph rather than with shame, upon every lady present) incited my curiosity to know if the same complacency might not be shewn to a private friend. 'Tis true, I was in honour obliged to keep the secret. But I never saw the turtles bill afterwards, but I thought of number Two to the same female; and in my heart thanked the fond husband for the lesson he had taught his wife.

From what I have said, thou wilt see, that I approve of my beloved's exception to *publick* loves. That, I hope, is all the charming icicle means by *marriage-purity*. But to return.

From the whole of what I have mentioned to have passed between my beloved and me, thou wilt gather, that I have not been a mere dangler, a Hickman, in the passed days, though not absolutely active, and a Lovelace.

The dear creature now considers herself as my wife-elect. The *unsaddened* heart, no longer prudish, will not now, I hope, give the sable turn to every address of the man she dislikes not. And yet she must keep up so much reserve, as will justify past inflexibilities. Many and many a pretty soul would yield, were she not afraid that the man she favoured would think the worse of her for it. This is also a part of the rake's creed. But should she resent ever so strongly, she cannot now break with me; since, if she does, there will be an end of the family reconciliation; and that in a way highly discreditable to herself.

SATURDAY, JUNE 3.

JUST returned from Doctors Commons. I have been endeavouring to get a licence. Very true, Jack. I have

have the mortification to find a difficulty, as the lady is of rank and fortune, and as there is no consent of father or *next friend*, in obtaining this *all-fettering* instrument.

I made report of this difficulty. 'It 'is very right,' *she says*, 'that such 'difficulties should be made.'—But not to a man of my known fortune, surely, Jack, though the woman were the daughter of a duke.

I asked, if she approved of the settlements? She said, She had compared them with my mother's, and had no objection to them. She had written to Miss Howe upon the subject, she owned; and to inform her of our present situation*.

* *

JUST now, in high good humour, my beloved returned me the draughts of the settlements: a copy of which I had sent to Captain Tomlinson. She complimented me, that she never had any doubt of my honour in cases of this nature.

In matters between man and man nobody ever had, thou knowest.

I had need, thou wilt say, to have some good qualities.

Great faults and great virtues are often found in the same person. In nothing *very* bad, but as to women: and did not one of them begin with me†?

We have held, that women have no souls. I am a very Turk in this point, and willing to believe they have not. And if so, to whom shall I be accountable for what I do to them? Nay, if souls they have, as there is no sex in etherials, nor need of any, what plea can a lady hold of injuries done her in her lady-*state*, when there is an end of her lady-*ship*?

LETTER LIV.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

MONDAY, JUNE 5.

I AM now almost in despair of succeeding with this charming frost-piece by love or gentleness.—A copy of the draughts, as I told thee, has been sent to Captain Tomlinson; and that by a special messenger. Engrossments are proceeding with. I have been again at the Commons.—Should in all probability have procured a licence by Mallory's means, had not Mallory's friend the proctor been suddenly sent for to Chesshunt, to make an old lady's will. Pritchard has told me by word of mouth, *though my charmer saw him not*, all that was necessary for her to know in the letter my lord wrote, which I could not shew her: and taken my directions about the estates to be made over to me on my nuptials.—Yet, with all these favourable appearances, no conceding moment to be found, no improveable tenderness to be raised.

But never, I believe, was there so true, so delicate a modesty in the human mind as in that of this lady. And this has been my security all along; and, in spite of Miss Howe's advice to her, will be so still; since, if her delicacy be a fault, she can no more overcome it than I can my aversion to matrimony. Habit, habit, Jack, seest thou not? may subject us both to weaknesses. And should she not have charity for me, as I have for her?

Twice indeed with rapture, which once she called rude, did I salute her; and each time resenting the freedom, did she retire; though, to do her justice, she favoured me again with her presence at my first entreaty, and took no notice of the cause of her withdrawing.

Is it policy to shew so open a resentment for innocent liberties, which, in her situation, she must so soon forgive?

Yet the woman who resents not initiatory freedoms must be lost. For love is an encroacher. Love never goes backward. Love is always aspiring. Always *must* aspire. Nothing but the highest act of love can satisfy an indulged love. And what advantages has a lover who values not breaking the peace, over his mistress who is solicitous to keep it!

I have now at this instant wrought myself up, for the dozenth time, to a half-resolution. A thousand agreeable

* As this letter of the lady to Miss Howe contains no new matter, but what may be collected from those of Mr. Lovelace, it is omitted.

† See Vol. I. Page 91.

things I have to say to her. She is in the dining-room. Juſt gone up. She always expects me when there,

* *

HIGH diſpleaſure!—followed by an abrupt departure.

I ſat down by her. I took both her hands in mine. I would *have* it ſo. All gentle my voice. Her father mentioned with reſpect. Her mother with reverence. Even her brother amicably ſpoken of. I never thought I could have wiſhed ſo ardently, as I told her I did wiſh, for a reconciliation with her family.

A ſweet and grateful fluſh then overſpread her fair face; a gentle ſigh now-and-then heaved her handkerchief.

I perfectly longed to hear from Captain Tomlinſon. It was impoſſible for the uncle to find fault with the draught of the ſettlements. I would not, however, be underſtood, by ſending them down, that I intended to put it in her uncle's power to delay my happy day. When, when, was it to be?

I would haſten again to the Commons; and would not return without the licence.

The Lawn I propoſed to retire to, as ſoon as the happy ceremony was over. This day and that day I propoſed.

It was time enough to name the day, when the ſettlements were compleated, and the licence obtained. Happy ſhould ſhe be, could the kind Captain Tomlinſon obtain her *uncle's preſence privately*.

A good hint!—It may perhaps be improved upon—Either for a *delay* or a *pacifier*.

No new delays for Heaven's ſake, I beſought her; and reproached her gently for the paſt. Name but the day—(an *early* day, I hoped it would be, in the following week)—that I might hail it's approach, and number the tardy hours.

My cheek reclined on her ſhoulder—kiſſing her hands by turns. Rather baſhfully than angrily reluctant, her hands ſought to be withdrawn; her ſhoulder avoiding my reclined cheek—Apparently loth, and more loth to quarrel with me; her downcaſt eye confeſſing more than her lips could utter. 'Now, ſurely,' thought I, 'is my time 'to try if ſhe can forgive a ſtill bolder 'freedom than I had ever yet taken.'

I then gave her ſtruggling hands liberty. I put one arm round her waiſt; I imprinted a kiſs on her ſweet lip, with a '*Be quiet*' only, and an averted face, as if ſhe feared another.

Encouraged by ſo gentle a repulſe, the tendereſt things I ſaid; and then, with my other hand, drew aſide the handkerchief that concealed the beauty of beauties, and preſſed with my burning lips the moſt charming breaſt that ever my raviſhed eyes beheld.

A very contrary paſſion to that which gave her boſom ſo delightful a ſwell, immediately took place. She ſtruggled out of my encircling arms with indignation. I detained her reluctant hand. 'Let me go,' ſaid ſhe. '*I ſee there is* '*no keeping terms with you.* Baſe en-'croacher! Is this the deſign of your 'flattering ſpeeches? Far as matters 'have gone, I will for ever renounce 'you. You have an odious heart. Let 'me go, I tell you.'

I was forced to obey, and ſhe flung from me, repeating *baſe*, and adding *flattering*, encroacher.

* *

IN vain have I urged by Dorcas for the promiſed favour of dining with her. She would not dine *at all*. She *could not*.

But why makes ſhe every inch of her perſon thus ſacred?—So near the time too, that ſhe muſt ſuppoſe, that all will be my own by deed of purchaſe and ſettlement?

She has read, no doubt, of the art of the eaſtern monarchs, who ſequeſter themſelves from the eyes of their ſubjects, in order to excite their adoration, when, upon ſome ſolemn occaſions, they think fit to appear in publick.

But let me aſk thee, Belford, whether (on theſe ſolemn occaſions) the preceding cavalcade; here a great officer, and there a great miniſter, with their ſatellites, and glaring equipages; do not prepare the eyes of the wondering beholders, by degrees, to bear the blaze of canopied majeſty, (what though but an ugly old man perhaps himſelf!) yet glittering in the collected riches of his vaſt empire?

And ſhould not my beloved, for her own ſake, deſcend, by *degrees*, from *goddeſs-hood* into *humanity!* If it be *pride* that reſtrains her, ought not that pride to be puniſhed? If, as in the eaſtern emperors, it be *art* as well as *pride*, *art* is what ſhe of all women need not uſe. If *ſhame*, what a ſhame to be aſhamed

aſhamed to communicate to her adorer's ſight the moſt admirable of her perſonal graces!

Let me periſh, Belford, if I would not forego the brighteſt diadem in the world, for the pleaſure of ſeeing a twin Lovelace at each charming breaſt, drawing from it his firſt ſuſtenance; the pious taſk, for phyſical reaſons*, continued for one month and no more!

I now, methinks, behold this moſt charming of women in this ſweet office: her conſcious eye now dropt on one, now on the other, with a ſigh of maternal tenderneſs, and then raiſed up to my delighted eye, full of wiſhes, for the ſake of the pretty varlets, and for her own ſake, that I would deign to legitimate; that I would condeſcend to put on the nuptial fetters.

LETTER LV.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

MONDAY AFTERNOON.

A Letter received from the worthy Captain Tomlinſon has introduced me into the preſence of my charmer ſooner perhaps than I ſhould otherwiſe have been admitted.

Sullen her brow, at her firſt entrance into the dining-room. But I took no notice of what had paſſed, and her anger of itſelf ſubſided.

The captain, after letting me know, that he choſe not to write, till he had promiſed the draught of the ſettlements, he acquaints me, that his friend Mr. John Harlowe, in their firſt conference, (which was held as ſoon as he got down) was extremely ſurprized, and even grieved, (*as he feared he would be*) to hear that we were not married. The world, he ſaid, who knew my character, would be very cenſorious, were it owned, that we had lived ſo long together unmarried in the ſame lodgings; although our marriage were now to be ever ſo publickly celebrated.

His nephew James, he was ſure, would make a great handle of it againſt any motion that might be made towards a reconciliation; and with the greater ſucceſs, as there was not a family in the kingdom more jealous of their honour than theirs.

This is true of the Harlowes, Jack: they have been called *The proud Harlowes:* and I have ever found, that all *young honour* is ſupercilious and touchy.

But ſeeſt thou not how right I was in my endeavour to perſuade my fair-one to allow her uncle's friend to think us married; eſpecially as he came *prepared* to believe it; and as her uncle *hoped* it was ſo?—But nothing on earth is ſo perverſe, as a woman when ſhe is ſet upon carrying a point, and has a *meek* man, or one who loves his *peace*, to deal with.

My beloved was vexed. She pulled out her handkerchief: but was more inclined to blame me, than herſelf.

'Had you kept your word, Mr. 'Lovelace, and left me when we came 'to town——' And there ſhe ſtopt; for ſhe knew, that it was her own fault that we were not married before we left the country; and how could I leave her *afterwards, while her brother was plotting to carry her off by violence?*

Nor has this brother yet given over his machinations.

For as the captain proceeds, Mr. John Harlowe owned to him, (but in confidence) that his nephew is at this time buſied in endeavouring to find out where we are; being aſſured (as I am not to be heard of at any of my relations, or at my uſual lodgings) that we are together. And that we are not married, is plain, as he will have it, *from Mr. Hickman's application ſo lately made to her uncle; and which was ſeconded by Mrs. Norton to her mother.* And her brother cannot bear that I ſhould enjoy ſuch a triumph unmoleſted.

A profound ſigh, and the handkerchief again lifted to the eye. But did not the ſweet ſoul deſerve this turn upon her for felonioufly reſolving to rob me of herſelf, had the application made by Hickman ſucceeded?

I read on to the following effect:

Why (aſked Mr. Harlowe) was it

* In Pamela, Vol. IV. Letter VI. theſe reaſons are given, and are worthy of every parent's conſideration, as is the whole letter, which contains the debate between Mr. B. and his Pamela, on the important ſubject of mothers being nurſes to their own children.

ſaid

ſaid to his other enquiring friend, that we *were* married; and that by his niece's woman, who ought to know? Who could give convincing reaſons, no doubt—

Here again ſhe wept; took a turn acroſs the room; then returned—'Read 'on,' ſays ſhe.

'Will you, my deareſt life, read it 'yourſelf?'

'I will take the letter with me, by-'and-by—I cannot *ſee* to read it juſt 'now,' wiping her eyes—'Read on—'Let me hear it all—that I may know '*your* ſentiments upon this letter, as 'well as give *my own*.'

The captain then told uncle-John, the reaſons that induced me to give out that we were married; and the conditions, on which my beloved was brought to countenance it; which had kept us at the moſt punctilious diſtance.

But ſtill, Mr. Harlowe objected my character. And went away diſſatisfied. And the captain was alſo ſo much concerned, that he cared not to write what the reſult of his firſt conference was.

But in the next, which was held on receipt of the draughts, at the captain's houſe, (as the former was, for the greater ſecreſy) when the old gentleman had read them, and had the captain's opinion, he was much better pleaſed. And yet he declared, that it would not be eaſy to perſuade *any other* perſon of his family to believe ſo favourably of the matter, as he was *now* willing to believe, were they to know that we had lived ſo long together unmarried.

And then the captain ſays, his dear friend made a propoſal:—It was this—*That we ſhould marry out of hand, but as privately as poſſible, as indeed he found we intended*—(for he could have no objection to the draughts)—*But yet, he expected to have preſent one truſty friend of his own, for his better ſatisfaction.*—

Here I ſtopt, with a deſign to be angry—But ſhe deſiring me to read on, I obeyed.

—*But that it ſhould paſs to every-one living, except to that truſty perſon, to himſelf, and to the captain, that we were married from the time that we had lived together in one houſe; and that this time ſhould be made to agree with that of Mr. Hickman's application to him from Miſs Howe.*

'This, my deareſt life,' ſaid I, 'is 'a very conſiderate propoſal. We have 'nothing to do, but to caution the peo-'ple below properly on this head. I 'did not think your uncle Harlowe ca-'pable of hitting upon ſuch a charm-'ing expedient as this. But you ſee 'how much his heart is in the recon-'ciliation.'

This was the return I met with—'You have always, as a mark of your 'politeneſs, let me know, how *meanly* 'you think of every-one of my family.'

Yet, thou wilt think, Belford, that *I could forgive her for the reproach.*

The captain does not know, he ſays, how this propoſal will be reliſhed by us. But, for his part, he thinks it an expedient that will obviate many difficulties, and may poſſibly put an end to Mr. James Harlowe's further deſigns: and on this account he has, *by the uncle's advice*, already declared to two ſeveral perſons, by whoſe means it may come to that young gentleman's ears, that he [Captain Tomlinſon] has very great reaſon to believe, that we were married ſoon after Mr. Hickman's application was rejected.

'And this, Mr. Lovelace,' (ſays the captain) 'will enable you to pay a com-'pliment to the family, that will not 'be unſuitable to the generoſity of ſome 'of the declarations you were pleaſed 'to make to the lady before me, (and 'which Mr. John Harlowe may make 'ſome advantage of in favour of a re-'conciliation;) in that you have not 'demanded your lady's eſtate ſo ſoon 'as you were entitled to make the de-'mand.' An excellent contriver, ſurely, ſhe muſt think this worthy Mr. Tomlinſon to be!

But the captain adds, that if either the lady or I diſapprove of his report of our marriage, he will retract it. Nevertheleſs, he muſt tell me, that Mr. John Harlowe is very much ſet upon this way of proceeding; as the only one, in his opinion, capable of being improved into a general reconciliation. But if we do acquieſce in it, he beſeeches my fair-one not to ſuſpend my day, that he may be authorized in what he ſays, as to the truth of the main fact. [*How conſcientious this good man!*] Nor muſt it be expected, he ſays, that her uncle will take one ſtep towards the wiſhed-for reconciliation, till the *ſolemnity is actually over.*

He

He adds, that he shall be very soon in town on other affairs; and then proposes to attend us, and give us a more particular account of all that has passed, or shall further pass, between Mr. Harlowe and him.

'Well, my dearest life, what say you 'to your uncle's expedient? Shall I 'write to the captain, and acquaint him, 'that we have no objection to it?'

She was silent for a few minutes. At last, with a sigh, 'See, Mr. Lovelace,' said she, 'what you have brought me 'to, by treading after you in such 'crooked paths!—See what disgrace I 'have incurred!—Indeed you have not 'acted like a wise man.'

'My beloved creature, do you not 'remember, how earnestly I besought 'the honour of your hand before we 'came to town?—Had I been *then* favoured——'

'Well, well, Sir—There has been 'much amiss somewhere; that's all I 'will say at present. And since what's 'passed cannot be recalled, my uncle 'must be obeyed, I think.'

Charmingly dutiful!—I had nothing then to do, that I might not be behindhand with the worthy captain and her uncle, but to press for the day. This I fervently did. But (as I might have expected) she repeated her former answer; to wit, That when the settlements were compleated; when the licence was actually obtained; it would be time enough to name the day: 'And, 'O Mr. Lovelace!' said she, turning from me with a grace inimitably tender, her handkerchief at her eyes, 'what a 'happiness, if my dear uncle could be 'prevailed upon to be personally a father, on this occasion, to *the poor fatherless girl!*'

What's the matter with me!—Whence this dew-drop!—A tear!—As I hope to be saved, it is a tear, Jack!—Very ready methinks!—Only on reciting!—But her lovely image was before me, in the very attitude she spoke the words—And indeed at the time she spoke them, these lines of Shakespeare came into my head—

'Thy heart is big. Get thee apart, and weep!
'Passion, I see, is catching—For my eyes,
'Seeing those beads of sorrow stand in thine,
'Begin to water.'—

I withdrew, and wrote to the captain to the following effect—I desired, that he would be so good as to acquaint his dear friend, that we entirely acquiesced with what he had proposed; and had already *properly* cautioned the gentlewoman of the house, and their servants, as well as our own: and to tell him, that if he would in person give me the blessing of his dear niece's hand, it would crown the wishes of both. In this case, I consented, that his own day, *as I presumed it would be a short one*, should be ours: that by this means the secret would be with fewer persons: that I myself, as well as he, thought the ceremony could not be too privately performed; and this not only for the sake of the wife end he had proposed to answer by it, but because I would not have Lord M. think himself slighted; since that nobleman, as I had told him, [the captain] had once intended to be our nuptial-father; and actually made the offer; but that we had declined to accept of it, and that for no other reason than to avoid a publick wedding; which his beloved niece would not come into, while she was in disgrace with her friends—But that if he chose not to do us this honour, I wished that Captain Tomlinson might be the trusty person whom he would have to be present on the happy occasion.

I shewed this letter to my fair-one. She was not displeased with it. So, Jack, we cannot now move too fast, as to settlements and licence: the day is her *uncle's day*, or *Captain Tomlinson's*, perhaps, as shall best suit the occasion. Miss Howe's smuggling-scheme is now surely provided against in all events.

But I will not by anticipation make thee a judge of all the benefits that may flow from this my elaborate contrivance. Why will these girls put me upon my *master-strokes?*

And now for a little mine which I am getting ready to spring. The *first* that I have sprung, and at the rate I go on, (now a *resolution*, and now a *remorse*) perhaps the *last* that I shall attempt to spring.

A *little* mine, I call it. But it may be attended with great effects. I shall not, however, absolutely depend upon the success of it, having much more effectual ones in reserve. And yet great engines are often moved by small springs. A little spark falling by accident into a powder-magazine, hath done

done more execution in a ſiege, than an hundred cannon.

Come the worſt, the *hymeneal torch*, and a *white ſheet*, muſt be my *amende honorable*, as the French have it.

LETTER LVI.

MR. BELFORD, TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

TUESDAY, JUNE 6.

UNSUCCESSFUL as hitherto my application to you has been, I cannot for the heart of me forbear writing once more in behalf of this admirable woman: and yet am unable to account for the zeal which impels me to take her part with an earneſtneſs ſo ſincere.

But all her merit thou acknowledgeſt; all thy own vileneſs thou confeſſeſt, and even glorieſt in it: what hope then of moving ſo hardened a man?—Yet, as it is not too late, and thou art nevertheleſs upon the criſis, I am reſolved to try what another letter will do. It is but my writing in vain, if it do no good; and if thou wilt let me prevail, I know thou wilt hereafter think me richly entitled to thy thanks.

To *argue* with thee would be folly. The caſe cannot require it. I will only *entreat* thee, therefore, that thou wilt not let ſuch an excellence loſe the reward of her vigilant virtue.

I believe there never were libertines ſo vile, but purpoſed, at ſome future period of their lives, to ſet about reforming; and let me beg of thee, that thou wilt, in this great article, make thy future repentance as eaſy, as ſome time hence thou wilt wiſh thou *hadſt* made it.

If thou proceedeſt, I have no doubt, that this affair will end tragically, one way or other. It *muſt*. Such a woman muſt intereſt both gods and men in her cauſe. But what I moſt apprehend, is, that with her own hand, in reſentment of the perpetrated outrage, ſhe (like another Lucretia) will aſſert the purity of her heart; or, if her piety preſerve her from this violence, that waſting grief will ſoon put a period to her days. And in either caſe, will not the remembrance of thy *ever-during* guilt, and *tranſitory* triumph, be a torment of torments to thee?

'Tis a ſeriouſly ſad thing, after all, that ſo fine a creature ſhould have fallen into ſuch vile and remorſeleſs hands: for, from thy cradle, as I have heard thee own, thou ever delighteſt to ſport with and torment the animal, whether bird or beaſt, that thou loveſt, and haſt a power over.

How different is the caſe of this fine woman from that of any other whom thou haſt ſeduced!—I need not mention to thee, nor inſiſt upon the ſtriking difference: juſtice, gratitude, thy intereſt, thy vows, all engaging thee; and thou certainly loving her, as far as thou art capable of love, above all her ſex. She not to be drawn aſide by art, or to be made to ſuffer from credulity, nor for want of wit and diſcernment; (that will be another cutting reflection to ſo fine a mind as hers:) the contention between you only unequal, as it is between naked innocence and armed guilt. In every-thing elſe, as thou owneſt, her talents greatly ſuperior to thine!—What a fate will hers be, if thou art not at laſt overcome by thy reiterated remorſes!

At firſt, indeed, when I was admitted into her preſence*, (and till I obſerved her meaning air, and heard her ſpeak) I ſuppoſed that ſhe had no very uncommon *judgment* to boaſt of: for I made, as I thought, but *juſt* allowances for her bloſſoming youth, and for that lovelineſs of perſon, and for that eaſe and elegance in her dreſs, which I imagined muſt have taken up half her time and ſtudy to cultivate; and yet I had been prepared by thee to entertain a very high opinion of her ſenſe and her reading. 'Her choice of 'this gay fellow, upon ſuch hazard-'ous terms,' (thought I) 'is a con-'firmation that her *wit* wants that ma-'turity which only *years* and *experi-'ence* can give it. Her *knowledge*,' (argued I to myſelf) 'muſt be all *the-'ory*; and the complaiſance ever con-'ſorting with an age ſo green and ſo 'gay, will make ſo inexperienced a 'lady at leaſt forbear to ſhew herſelf 'diſguſted at freedoms of diſcourſe in 'which thoſe preſent of her own ſex,

* See Vol. III. Page 445.

'and

'and some of ours, (so learned, so well 'read, and so travelled) allow them-'selves.'

In this presumption, I ran on; and having the advantage, as I conceited, of all the company but you, and being desirous to appear in her eyes a mighty clever fellow, I thought I *shewed away*, when I said any foolish things that had more sound than sense in them; and when I made silly jests, which attracted the smiles of thy Sinclair, and the specious Partington: and that Miss Harlowe did not smile too, I thought was owing to her youth or affectation, or to a mixture of both, perhaps to a greater command of her features.—Little dreamt I, that I was incurring her contempt all the time.

But when, as I said, I heard her speak, which she did not till she had fathomed us all; when I heard her sentiments on two or three subjects, and took notice of that searching eye, darting into the very inmost cells of our frothy brains; by my faith, it made me look about me; and I began to recollect, and be ashamed of all I had said before; in short, was resolved to sit silent, till every-one had talked round, to keep my folly in countenance. And then I raised the subjects that she *could* join in, and which she *did* join in, so much to the confusion and surprize of every-one of us!—For even thou, Lovelace, so noted for smart wit, repartee, and a vein of raillery, that delighteth all who come near thee, fattest in palpable darkness, and lookedst about thee, as well as we.

One instance only, of this, shall I remind thee of?

We talked of *wit*, and of *wit*, and aimed at it, bandying it like a ball from one to another, and resting it chiefly with thee, who wert always proud enough and vain enough of the attribute; and then more especially as thou hadst assembled us, as far as I know, principally to shew the lady thy superiority over us; and us thy triumph over her. And then Tourville (who is always satisfied with wit at *second-hand*; wit upon memory; other mens wit) repeated some verses, as applicable to the subject; which two of us applauded, though full of *double entendre*. Thou, seeing the lady's serious air on one of those repetitions, applied'st thyself to her, desiring her notions of wit: a quality, thou saidst, which every-one prized, whether flowing from himself, or found in another.

Then it was that she took all our attention. It was a quality much talked of, she said, but, she believed, very little understood. At least, if she might be so free as to give her judgment of it from what had passed in the present conversation, she must say, that wit with men was one thing; with women, another.

This startled us all:—how the women looked!—How they pursed in their mouths; a broad smile the moment before, upon each, from the verses they had heard repeated, so well understood, as we saw, by their looks! While I besought her to let us know, for our instruction, what wit was with *women*: for such I was sure it *ought* to be with *men*.

Cowley, she said, had defined it prettily by negatives. Thou desiredst her to repeat his definition.

She did; and with so much graceful ease, and beauty, and propriety of accent, as would have made bad poetry delightful.

'A thousand different shapes it bears;
'Comely in thousand shapes appears.
'Tis not a *tale*, 'tis not a *jest*,
'Admir'd with *laughter* at a *feast*,
'Nor *florid talk*, which must this title gain:
'The proofs of wit for ever must remain.
'Much less can that have any place
'At which a virgin hides her face.
'Such dross the fire must purge away:—'Tis just
'The author blush there, where the reader *must*.'

Here she stopt, looking round her upon us all with conscious superiority, as I thought. Lord, how we stared! Thou attemptedst to give us thy definition of wit, that thou mightest have something to say, and not seem to be surprized into silent modesty.

But, as if she cared not to trust thee with the subject, referring to the same author as for his more positive decision, she thus, with the same harmony of voice and accent, emphatically decided upon it.

'*Wit*, like a luxuriant vine,
'Unless to *Virtue's* prop it join,

'Firm and erect, tow'rd Heaven bound,
'Though it with beauteous leaves and
'pleasant fruit be crown'd,
'It lies deform'd, and rotting on the ground.'

If thou recollectest this part of the conversation, and how like fools we looked at one another; how much it put us out of conceit with ourselves, and made us fear her, when we found our conversation thus excluded from the very character which our vanity had made us think unquestionably ours; and if thou profitest properly by the recollection, thou wilt be of my mind, that there is not so much wit in wickedness as we had flattered ourselves there was.

And after all, I have been of opinion ever since *that* conversation, that the wit of all the rakes and libertines I ever conversed with, from the brilliant Bob Lovelace down to little Johnny Hartop the punster, consists mostly in saying bold and shocking things, with such courage as shall make the modest blush, the impudent laugh, and the ignorant stare.

And why dost thou think I mention these things, so mal-à-propos, as it may seem!—Only, let me tell thee, as an instance (among many that might be given from the same evening's conversation) of this fine woman's superiority in those talents which ennoble nature, and dignify her sex—Evidenced not only to each of us, as we offended, but to the flippant Partington, and the grosser, but egregiously hypocritical Sinclair, in the correcting eye, the discouraging blush, in which was mixed as much displeasure as modesty, and sometimes, as the occasion called for it, (for we were some of us hardened above the sense of feeling *delicate* reproof) by the sovereign contempt, mingled with a disdainful kind of pity, that shewed at once her own conscious worth, and our despicable worthlessness.

O Lovelace! what then was the triumph, even in my eye, and what is it still upon reflection, of *true* modesty, of *true* wit, and *true* politeness, over frothy jest, laughing impertinence, and an obscenity so shameful, even to the guilty, that they cannot hint at it but under a double meaning!

Then, as thou hast somewhere observed*, all her correctives *avowed* by her eye. Not poorly, like the generality of her sex, affecting ignorance of meanings too obvious to be concealed; but so resenting, as to shew each impudent laugher, the offence given to, and taken by, a purity, that had mistaken it's way, when it fell into such company.

Such is the woman, such is the angel, whom thou hast betrayed into thy power, and wouldst deceive and ruin.—Sweet creature! did she but know how she is surrounded, (as I then thought, as well as now think) and what is *intended*, how much sooner would death be her choice, than so dreadful a situation!—And how effectually would her story, were it generally known, warn all the sex against throwing themselves into the power of ours, let our vows, oaths, and protestations, be what they will!

But let me beg of thee, once more, my dear Lovelace, if thou hast any regard for thine own honour, for the honour of thy family, for thy future peace, or for my opinion of thee, (who yet pretend not to be so much moved by principle, as by that dazzling merit which ought still more to attract *thee*) to be prevailed upon—to be—to be *humane*, that's all—Only, that thou wouldest not disgrace our common humanity!

Hardened as thou art, I know, that they are the abandoned people in the house who keep thee up to a resolution against her. O that the sagacious fair-one (with so much innocent charity in her own heart) had not so resolutely held those women at distance!—That, as she *boarded* there, she had oftener *tabled* with them! Specious as they are, in a week's time, she would have seen through them; they could not have been always so guarded, as they were when they saw her but seldom, and when they *prepared* themselves to see her; and she would have fled their house as a place infected. And yet, perhaps, with so determined an enterprizer, this discovery might have accelerated her ruin.

I know that thou art nice in thy loves. But are there not hundreds of women, who, though not utterly a-

* See Page 548.

bandoned,

bandoned, would be taken with thee for mere *perſonal* regards! Make a toy, if thou wilt, of principle with reſpect to ſuch of the ſex as regard it as a toy; but rob not an angel of thoſe purities, which, in her own opinion, conſtitute the difference between angelick and brutal qualities.

With regard to the paſſion itſelf, the leſs of ſoul in either man or woman, the more ſenſual are they. Thou, Lovelace, haſt a ſoul, though a corrupted one; and art more intent (as thou even glorieſt) upon the preparative ſtratagem, than upon the end of conquering.

See we not the natural bent of ideots and the crazed? the very appetite is *body*; and when we ourſelves are moſt fools, and crazed, then are we moſt eager in theſe purſuits. See what fools this paſſion makes the wiſeſt men! What ſnivellers, what dotards, when they ſuffer themſelves to be run away with by it!—An *unpermanent paſſion!* Since, if (aſhamed of it's *more proper* name) we muſt call it *love, love gratified, is love ſatisfied—And love ſatisfied, is indifference begun.* And this is the caſe where *conſent* on one ſide adds to the obligation on the other. What then but remorſe can follow a forcible attempt?

Do not even chaſte lovers chuſe to be alone in their courtſhip preparations, aſhamed to have even a child to witneſs to their fooliſh actions, and more fooliſh expreſſions? Is this deified paſſion, in it's greateſt altitudes, fitted to ſtand the day? Do not the lovers, when mutual conſent awaits their wills, retire to coverts, and to darkneſs, to compleat their wiſhes? And ſhall ſuch a ſneaking paſſion as this, which can be ſo eaſily gratified by viler objects, be permitted to debaſe the nobleſt?

Were not the delays of thy vile purpoſes owing more to the awe which her majeſtick virtue has inſpired thee with, than to thy want of adroitneſs in villainy; [I *muſt* write my free ſentiments in this caſe; for have I not *ſeen* the angel?] I ſhould be ready to cenſure ſome of thy contrivances and pretences to ſuſpend the expected day, as *trite, ſtale*, and (to me, who know thy intention) *poor*; and too often reſorted to, as nothing comes of them, to be gloried in; particularly that of Mennell, the vapouriſh lady, and the ready-furniſhed houſe.

She muſt have thought ſo too, at times, and in her heart deſpiſed thee for them, or love thee (ungrateful as thou art!) to her misfortune; as well as entertain hope againſt probability. But this would afford another warning to the ſex, were they to know her ſtory; as it would ſhew them what poor pretences they muſt *ſeem* to be ſatisfied with, if once they put themſelves into the power of a deſigning man.

If *trial* only was thy end, as once was thy pretence*, enough ſurely haſt thou tried this paragon of virtue and vigilance. But I knew thee too well, to expect, at the *time*, that thou wouldeſt ſtop there. Men of our caſt put no other bound to their views upon any of the ſex, than what want of power compels them to put. I knew that from one advantage gained, thou wouldeſt proceed to attempt another. Thy habitual averſion to wedlock, too well I knew; and indeed thou avoweſt thy hope to bring her to *cohabitation*, in that very letter in which thou pretendeſt *trial* to be thy principal view†.

But do not even thy own frequent and involuntary remorſes, when thou haſt time, place, company, and every other circumſtance, to favour thee in thy wicked deſign, convince thee, that there can be no room for a hope ſo preſumptuous?—Why then, ſince thou wouldeſt chuſe to marry her rather than loſe her, wilt thou make her hate thee for ever?

But if thou dareſt to meditate *perſonal* trial, and art ſincere in thy reſolution to reward her, as ſhe behaves in it, let me beſeech thee to remove her from this vile houſe. That will be to give her and thy conſcience fair play. So entirely now does the ſweet deluded excellence depend upon her ſuppoſed happier proſpects, that thou needeſt not to fear that ſhe will fly from thee, or that ſhe will wiſh to have recourſe to that ſcheme of Miſs Howe, which has put thee upon what thou calleſt thy *maſter-ſtroke*.

But whatever be thy determination on this head; and if I write not in

* See Vol. III. Letter XIV.

† See Vol. III. p. 336. See alſo Letters XII. XIII. of that Volume.

time, but that thou haſt actually pulled off the maſk; let it not be one of thy devices, if thou wouldeſt avoid the curſes of every heart, and hereafter of thy own, to give her, no not for one hour, (be her reſentment ever ſo great) into the power of that villainous woman, who has, if poſſible, leſs remorſe than thyſelf; and whoſe *trade* it is to break the reſiſting ſpirit, and utterly to ruin the heart unpractiſed in evil.—O Lovelace, Lovelace, how many dreadful ſtories could this horrid woman tell the ſex! And ſhall that of a Clariſſa ſwell the guilty liſt?

But this I might have ſpared. Of this, devil as thou art, thou canſt not be capable. Thou couldſt not enjoy a triumph ſo diſgraceful to thy wicked pride, as well as to humanity.

Shouldeſt thou think, that the melancholy ſpectacle hourly before me has made me more ſerious than uſual, perhaps thou wilt not be miſtaken. But nothing more is to be inferred from hence (were I even to return to my former courſes) but that whenever the time of cool reflection comes, whether brought on by our own diſaſters, or by thoſe of others, we ſhall undoubtedly, if capable of thought, and if we have time for it, think in the ſame manner.

We neither of us are ſuch fools as to diſbelieve a futurity, or to think, whatever be our practice, that we came hither by chance, and for no end but to do all the miſchief we have it in our power to do. Nor am I aſhamed to own, that in the prayers which my poor uncle makes me read to him, in the abſence of a very good clergyman who regularly attends him, I do not forget to put in a word or two for myſelf.

If, Lovelace, thou laugheſt at me, thy ridicule will be more conformable to thy *actions* than to thy *belief*.—*Devils believe and tremble.* Canſt thou be more abandoned than they?

And here let me add, with regard to my poor old man, that I often wiſh thee preſent but for one half-hour in a day, to ſee the dregs of a gay life running off in the moſt excruciating tortures, that the colick, the ſtone, and the ſurgeon's knife, can unitedly inflict, and to hear him bewail the diſſoluteneſs of his paſt life, in the bitterſt anguiſh of a ſpirit every hour expecting to be called to it's laſt account.—Yet, by all his confeſſions, he has not to accuſe himſelf, in ſixty-ſeven years of life, of half the *very* vile enormities, which you and I have committed in the laſt ſeven only.

I conclude with recommending to your ſerious conſideration all I have written, as proceeding from the heart and ſoul of *your aſſured friend*,

JOHN BELFORD.

LETTER LVII.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 6.

DIFFICULTIES ſtill to be got over in procuring this plaguy licence. I ever hated, and ever ſhall hate, theſe ſpiritual lawyers, and their court.

And now, Jack, if I have not ſecured *victory*, I have a *retreat*.

But hold—Thy ſervant with a letter—

* *

A CONFOUNDED *long* one, though not a *narrative* one—Once more in behalf of this lady!—Lie thee down, oddity! What canſt thou write that can have force upon me at this criſis?—And have I not, as I went along, made thee to ſay all that was neceſſary for thee to ſay?

* *

YET once more, I will take thee up. *Trite, ſtale, poor,* (ſayeſt thou) are ſome of my contrivances? That of the widow particularly!—I have no patience with thee. Had not that contrivance it's effect at that time, for a procraſtination?—And had I not then reaſon to fear, that the lady would find enough to make her diſlike this houſe? And was it not right (intending what I intended) to lead her on from time to time, with a notion, that a houſe of her own would be ready for her ſoon, in order to induce her to continue here till it was?

Trite, ſtale, and *poor!*—Thou art a ſilly fellow, and no judge, when thou ſayeſt this. Had I not, like a blockhead, revealed to thee, as I *went along*, the ſecret purpoſes of my heart, but had kept all in, till the event had explained my myſteries, I would have defied thee to have been able, any more than the lady, to have gueſſed at what was to befal

befal her; till it had actually come to paſs. Nor doubt I, in this caſe, that, inſtead of preſuming to reflect upon her for credulity, as *loving me to her misfortune*, and for *hoping againſt probability*, thou wouldeſt have been readier, by far, to cenſure her for nicety and over-ſcrupulouſneſs. And, let me tell thee, that had ſhe loved me as I wiſhed her to love me, ſhe could not poſſibly have been ſo very apprehenſive of my deſigns, nor ſo ready to be influenced by Miſs Howe's precautions, as ſhe has always been, although my general character made not for me with her.

But in thy opinion, I ſuffer for that ſimplicity in my contrivances, which is their principal excellence. No machinery make I neceſſary. No unnatural flights aim I at. All pure nature, taking advantage of nature, as nature tends; and ſo ſimple my devices, that when they are known, thou, even *thou*, imagineſt, thou couldeſt have thought of the ſame. And indeed thou ſeemeſt to *own*, that the ſlight thou putteſt upon them, is owing to my letting thee into them before-hand—undiſtinguiſhing, as well as ungrateful as thou art!

Yet, after all, I would not have thee think, that I do not know my weak places. I have formerly told thee, that it is difficult for the ableſt general to ſay what he *will* do, or what he *can* do, when he is obliged to regulate his motions by thoſe of a watchful enemy*. If thou giveſt due weight to this conſideration, thou wilt not wonder that I ſhould make many marches and countermarches, ſome of which may appear to a ſlight obſerver unneceſſary.

But let me curſorily enter into debate with thee on this ſubject, now I am within ſight of my journey's end.

Abundance of impertinent things thou telleſt me in this letter; ſome of which thou hadſt from myſelf; others that I knew before.

All that thou ſayeſt in this charming creature's praiſe, is ſhort of what I have ſaid and written, on the inexhauſtible ſubject.

Her virtue, her reſiſtance, which are her *merits*, are my *ſtimulatives*. Have I not told thee ſo twenty times over?

Devil, as theſe girls between them call me, what of devil am I, but in my *contrivances?* I am not more a devil, than others, in the *end* I aim at; for when I have carried my point, it is ſtill but *one* ſeduction. And I have perhaps been ſpared the guilt of *many* ſeductions in the time.

What of uncommon would there be in this caſe, but for her watchfulneſs?—As well as I love intrigue and ſtratagem, doſt think, that I had not rather have gained my end with leſs trouble and leſs guilt?

The man, let me tell thee, who is as wicked as he *can* be, is a worſe man than I am. Let me aſk any rake in England, if, reſolving to carry his point, he would have been *ſo long about it?* or have had *ſo much compunction* as I have had?

Were every rake, nay, were every man, to ſet down, as I do, and write all that enters into his head, or into his heart, and to accuſe himſelf with equal freedom and truth, what an army of miſcreants ſhould I have to keep me in countenance!

It is a maxim with ſome, that if they are left alone with a woman, and make not an attempt upon her, ſhe will think herſelf affronted—Are not ſuch men as theſe worſe than I am? What an opinion muſt they have of the whole ſex?

Let me defend the ſex I ſo dearly love. If theſe elder brethren of ours think they have general reaſon for their aſſertion, they muſt have kept very bad company, or muſt judge of womens hearts by their own. She muſt be an abandoned woman, who will not ſhrink as a ſnail into it's ſhell, at a *groſs* and *ſudden* attempt. A modeſt woman muſt be naturally *cold*, *reſerved*, and *ſhy*. She cannot be *ſo much*, and *ſo ſoon* affected as libertines are apt to imagine. She muſt, *at leaſt*, have ſome confidence in the *honour* and *ſilence* of a man, before deſire can poſſibly put forth in her, to encourage and meet his flame. For my own part, I have been always decent in the company of women, till I was *ſure* of them. Nor have I ever offered a *great* offence, till I have found *little* ones paſſed over; and that they ſhunned me not, when they knew my character.

My divine Clariſſa has puzzled me, and beat me out of my play: at one time, I hoped to overcome by *intimidating* her; at another, by *love*; by the

* See Vol. III. p. 379.

amorous

amorous *fee-faw*, as I have called it*. And I have only now to join *surprize* to the other two, and see what can be done by all three.

And whose property, I pray thee, shall I invade, if I pursue my schemes of love and vengeance? Have not those who have a right to her, renounced that right? Have they not wilfully exposed her to dangers? Yet must know, that such a woman would be considered as lawful prize, by as many as could have the opportunity to attempt her?—And had they not thus cruelly exposed her, is she not a *single woman?* And need I tell thee, Jack, that men of our cast, the *best* of them, [the *worst* stick at nothing] think it a great grace and favour done to the married men, if they leave them their wives to themselves; and compound for their sisters, daughters, wards, and nieces? Shocking as these principles must be to a reflecting mind, yet such thou knowest are the principles of thousands, (who would not act so generously, as I have acted by almost all the sex, over whom I have obtained a power;) and as often carried into practice, as their opportunities or courage will permit.—Such therefore have no right to blame *me*.

Thou repeatedly pleadest her sufferings from her family. But I have too often answered this plea, to need to say any more now, than that she has not suffered for *my sake*. For has she not been made the victim of the malice of her rapacious brother and envious sister, who only waited for an occasion to ruin her with her other relations; and took this *as the first* to drive her out of the house; and as it happened, into my arms?—Thou knowest how much *against her inclination*.

As for her *own* sins, how many has the dear creature to answer for to *love* and to *me!*—Twenty times, and twenty times twenty, has she not told me, that she refused not the odious Solmes in favour to me? And as often has she not offered to renounce me for the single life, if the implacables would have received her on that condition?—Of what repetitions does thy weak pity make me guilty?

To look a little farther back: Canst thou forget what my sufferings were from this haughty beauty in the whole time of my attendance upon her proud motions, in the purlieus of Harlowe Place, and at the little White Hart at Neale, as we called it?—Did I not threaten vengeance upon her then, (and had I not reason?) for disappointing me of a promised interview?

O Jack! what a night had I in the bleak coppice adjoining to her father's paddock! My linen and wig frozen; my limbs absolutely numbed; my fingers only sensible of so much warmth, as enabled me to hold a pen; and that obtained by rubbing the skin off, and by beating with my hands my shivering sides! Kneeling on the hoar-moss on one knee, writing on the other, if the stiff scrawl could be called writing! My feet, by the time I had done, seeming to have taken root, and actually unable to support me for some minutes!—Love and rage then kept my heart in motion, [and only love and rage could do it] or how much more than I *did* suffer, must I have suffered!

I told thee, at my melancholy return, what were the contents of the letter I wrote†. And I shewed thee afterwards, her tyrannical answer to it‡. Thou, then, Jack, lovedst thy friend; and pitiedst thy poor suffering Lovelace. Even the affronted god of Love approved then of my threatened vengeance against the fair promiser; though now with thee, in the day of my power, forgetful of the night of my sufferings, he is become an advocate for her.

Nay, was it not he himself that brought to me my adorable *Nemesis*; and both together put me upon this very vow, That I would never rest till I had drawn in this goddess-daughter of the Harlowes to cohabit with me; and that in the face of all their proud family?

Nor canst thou forget this vow.—At this instant I have thee before me, as then thou sorrowfully lookedst. Thy strong features glowing with compassion for me; thy lips twisted; thy forehead furrowed; thy whole face drawn out from the stupid round into the ghastly oval; every muscle contributing it's power to compleat the aspect grievous; and not one word couldst thou utter, but *amen* to my vow.

* See Vol. III. p. 331. † See Vol. II. p. 201. ‡ Ibid. p. 202.

And

And what of diſtinguiſhing love, or favour, or confidence, have I had from her ſince, to make me forego this vow?

I *renewed* it not, indeed, afterwards; and actually, for a long ſeaſon, was willing to forget it; till repetitions of the ſame faults revived the remembrance of the former. And now adding to thoſe the contents of ſome of Miſs Howe's virulent letters, ſo lately come at, what canſt thou ſay for the rebel, conſiſtent with thy loyalty to thy friend?

Every man to his genius and conſtitution. Hannibal was called *The father of warlike ſtratagems*. Had Hannibal been a private man, and turned his plotting head againſt the *other ſex*, or had I been a general, and turned mine againſt ſuch of my fellow-creatures of *my own*, as I thought myſelf entitled to conſider as my enemies, becauſe they were born and lived in a different climate; Hannibal would have done leſs miſchief; Lovelace more.—That would have been the difference.

Not a ſovereign on earth, if he be not a *good man*, and if he be of a warlike temper, but muſt do a thouſand times more miſchief than I. And why? Becauſe he has it in his *power* to do more.

An honeſt man, perhaps thou'lt ſay, will not wiſh to have it in his power to do hurt. He *ought not*, let me tell him: for, if he have it, a thouſand to one but it makes him both wanton and wicked.

In what, then, am I ſo *ſingularly* vile?

In my *contrivances*, thou wilt ſay, (for thou art my echo) if not in my propoſed *end* of them.

How difficult does every man find it, as well as I, to forego a predominant paſſion! I have three paſſions that ſway me by turns; all imperial ones. Love, Revenge, Ambition, or a deſire of conqueſt.

As to this particular contrivance of Tomlinſon and the uncle, which perhaps thou wilt think a black one; that had been ſpared, had not theſe *innocent* ladies put me upon finding a huſband for their Mrs. Townſend: that device, therefore, is but a *preventive* one. Thinkeſt thou, that I could bear to be outwitted? And may not this very contrivance ſave a world of miſchief? For doſt thou think, I would have tamely given up the lady to Townſend's tars?

What meaneſt thou, except to overthrow thy own plea, when thou ſayeſt, *that men of our caſt know no other bound to their wickedneſs, but want of power*; yet knoweſt this lady to be in mine?

Enough, ſayeſt thou, *have I tried this paragon of virtue.* Not ſo; for I have not tried her at all—All I have been doing, is but *preparation to a trial.*

But thou art concerned for the *means* that I may have recourſe to in the *trial*, and for my *veracity*.

Silly fellow!—Did ever any man, thinkeſt thou, deceive a woman, but at the expence of his veracity; how, otherwiſe, can he be ſaid to *deceive?*

As to the *means*, thou doſt not imagine, that I expect a *direct* conſent. My main hope is but in a yielding reluctance; without which I will be ſworn, whatever rapes have been attempted, none ever were committed, one perſon to one perſon. And good Queen Beſs of England, had ſhe been living, and appealed to, would have declared herſelf of my mind.

It would not be amiſs for the ſex to know, what our opinions are upon this ſubject. I love to warn them. I wiſh no man to ſucceed with them but myſelf. I told thee once, that *though a rake, I am not a rake's friend**.

Thou ſayeſt, that I ever hated wedlock. And true thou ſayeſt. And yet *as* true, when thou telleſt me, that I *would rather marry than loſe this lady.* And *will ſhe deteſt me for ever*, thinkeſt thou, if I try her, and ſucceed not?—Take care—Take care, Jack!—Seeſt thou not, that thou warneſt me, that I do not try without reſolving to conquer?

I muſt add, that I have for ſome time been convinced, that I have done wrong, to ſcribble to thee ſo freely as I have done, (and the more ſo, if I make the lady legally mine;) for has not every letter I have written to thee, been a bill of indictment againſt myſelf? I may partly curſe my vanity for it; and I think I will refrain for the future; for thou art really very impertinent.

A *good* man, I own, might urge many of the things thou urgeſt; but, by my ſoul, they come very aukwarkly from

* See Vol. III. page 336.

thee.

thee. And thou muſt be ſenſible, that I can anſwer every tittle of what thou writeſt, upon the foot of the *maxims we have long held and purſued*.—By the ſpecimen above, thou wilt ſee that I can.

And pr'ythee tell me, Jack, what but this that follows would have been the epitome of mine and my beloved's ſtory, *after ten years cohabitation*, had I never written to thee upon the ſubject, and had I not been my own accuſer?

'Robert Lovelace, a notorious woman-eater, makes his addreſſes in an honourable way to Miſs Clariſſa Harlowe; a young lady of the higheſt merit—Fortunes on both ſides out of the queſtion.

'After encouragement given, he is inſulted by her violent brother; who thinks it his intereſt to diſcountenance the match; and who at laſt challenging him, is obliged to take his worthleſs life at his hands.

'The family, as much enraged, as if he had *taken* the life he *gave*, inſult him perſonally, and find out an odious lover for the young lady.

'To avoid a forced marriage, ſhe is prevailed upon to take a ſtep, which throws her into Mr. Lovelace's protection.

'Yet, diſclaiming any paſſion for him, ſhe repeatedly offers to renounce him for ever, if, on that condition, her relations will receive her, and free her from the addreſs of the man ſhe hates.

'Mr. Lovelace, a man of ſtrong paſſions, and, as ſome ſay, of great pride, thinks himſelf under very little obligation to her on this account; and not being naturally fond of marriage, and having ſo much reaſon to hate her relations, endeavours to prevail upon her to live with him, what he calls the *life of honour*: and at laſt, by ſtratagem, art, and contrivance, prevails.

'He reſolves never to marry any other woman: takes a pride to have her called by his name: a church-rite all the difference between them: treats her with deſerved tenderneſs. Nobody queſtions their marriage but thoſe proud relations of hers, whom he wiſhes to queſtion it. Every year a charming boy. Fortunes to ſupport the increaſing family with ſplendor.

'A tender father. Always a warm friend; a generous landlord, and a punctual paymaſter. Now-and-then, however, perhaps, indulging with a new object, in order to bring him back with greater delight to his charming Clariſſa—His only fault love of the ſex—Which, nevertheleſs, the women ſay, will cure itſelf—Defenſible *thus far*, that he breaks no contracts by his rovings.'

And what is there ſo very greatly amiſs, AS THE WORLD GOES, in all this?

Let me aver, that there are thouſands and ten thouſands, who have worſe ſtories to tell than this would appear to be, had I not intereſted thee in the progreſs to my great end. And beſides, thou knoweſt that the character I gave myſelf to Joſeph Leman, as to my treatment of my miſtreſſes, is pretty near the truth*.

Were I to be as much in earneſt in my defence, as thou art warm in my arraignment, I could convince thee, by other arguments, obſervations, and compariſons, [*Is not all human good and evil comparative?*] that though from my ingenuous temper, (writing only to thee, who art maſter of every ſecret of my heart) I am ſo ready to accuſe myſelf in my narrations; yet I have ſomething to ſay *for* myſelf *to* myſelf, as I go along; though no one elſe, perhaps, that was not a rake, would allow any weight to it.—And this caution might I give to thouſands, who would ſtoop for a ſtone to throw at me: 'See that your own *predominant paſſions*, whatever they be, hurry you not into as much wickedneſs, as *mine* do *me*. See, if ye happen to be better than I in ſome things, that ye are not worſe in others; and in points too, that may be of more extenſive bad conſequences, than that of ſeducing a girl, (and taking care of her afterwards) who *from her cradle is armed with cautions againſt the deluſions of men*.' And yet I am not ſo partial to my own follies as to think lightly of *this* fault, when I allow myſelf to think.

Another grave thing will I add, now my hand is in: So dearly do I love the ſex, that had I found, that a character for virtue had been generally *neceſſary* to recommend me to them, I ſhould

* See Vol. III. page 398.

have

have had a much greater regard to my morals as to the sex, than I have had.

To sum up all—I am sufficiently apprized, that men of worthy and honest hearts, who never allowed themselves in *premeditated* evil, and who take into the account the excellences of this fine creature, will and must not only condemn, but *abhor* me, were they to know as much of me as thou dost. But, methinks, I would be glad to escape the censure of those men, and of those women too, who have never known what capital trials and temptations are; of those who have no genius for enterprize; of those who want rather courage than will; and most particularly of those, who have only kept their secret better than I have kept, or wish to keep, mine. Were these exceptions to take place, perhaps, Jack, I should have ten to acquit, to one that would condemn me. Have I not often said, *That human nature is a rogue?*

* *

I THREATENED above to refrain writing to thee. But take it not to heart, Jack—I must write on, and cannot help it.

LETTER LVIII.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT, 11 O'CLOCK.

FAITH, Jack, thou hadst half undone me with thy nonsense, though I would not own it in my yesterday's letter: my conscience of thy party before.—But I think I am my own man again.

So near to execution my plot; so near springing my mine; all agreed upon between the women and me; or I believe thou hadst overthrown me.

I have time for a few lines preparative to what is to happen in an hour or two; and I love to write to the *moment*.

We have been extremely happy. How many agreeable days have we known together?—What may the next two hours produce?

When I parted with my charmer, (which I did, with infinite reluctance, half an hour ago) it was upon her promise, that she would not sit up to write or read. For so engaging was the conversation to me, (and indeed my behaviour throughout the whole of it was confessedly agreeable to her) that I insisted, if she did not directly retire to rest, that she should add another happy hour to the former.

To have sat up writing or reading half the night, as she sometimes does, would have frustrated my view, as thou wilt observe, when my little plot unravels.

* *

'WHAT—What—What now!—'Bounding villain! wouldst thou choak 'me!'

I was speaking to my heart, Jack!—It was then at my throat.—And what is all this for?—These shy women, how, when a man thinks himself near the mark, do they *tempest* him!

* *

'Is all ready, Dorcas? Has my be-'loved kept her word with me?'—Whether are these billowy heavings owing more to love or to fear? I cannot tell for the soul of me, of which I have most. If I can but take her before her apprehension, before her eloquence, is awake—

Limbs, why thus convulsed?—Knees, till now so firmly knit, why thus relaxed? Why beat you thus together? Will not these trembling fingers, which twice have refused to direct the pen, fail me in the arduous moment?

Once again, Why and for what all these convulsions? This project is not to end in *matrimony*, surely!

But the consequences must be greater than I had thought of till this moment—My beloved's destiny or my own may depend upon the issue of the two next hours!

I will recede, I think!—

* *

SOFT, O virgin saint, and safe as soft, be thy slumbers!

I will now once more turn to my friend Belford's letter. Thou shalt have fair play, my charmer. I will peruse what thy advocate has to say for thee. Weak arguments will do, in the frame I am in!

But, what, what's the matter!—What a *double*—But the uproar abates!—What a *double coward* am I?—Or is it that I am taken in a cowardly minute? For heroes have their fits of *fear*; cowards their *brave* moments;

and virtuous women, all but my Clariſſa, their moment *critical*.

But thus coolly enjoying thy reflections in a hurricane!—Again the confuſion is renewed!

What!—Where!—How came it!

Is my beloved ſafe—

O wake not too roughly my beloved!

LETTER LIX.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

THURSDAY MORNING, FIVE O'CLOCK, (JUNE 8.)

NOW is my reformation ſecured; for I never ſhall love any other woman! O ſhe is all variety! She muſt be ever new to me! *Imagination* cannot form; much leſs can the pencil paint; nor can the ſoul of painting, *Poetry*, deſcribe an angel ſo exquiſitely, ſo elegantly lovely!—But I will not by anticipation pacify thy impatience. Although the ſubject is too hallowed for profane contemplation, yet ſhalt thou have the whole before thee as it paſſed: and this not from a ſpirit wantoning in deſcription upon ſo rich a ſubject; but with a deſign to put a bound to thy roving thoughts. It will be iniquity *greater than a Lovelace ever was guilty of*, to carry them farther than I ſhall acknowledge.

Thus then connecting my laſt with the preſent, I lead to it.

Didſt thou not, by the concluſion of my former, perceive the conſternation I was in, juſt as I was about to re-peruſe thy letter, in order to prevail upon myſelf to recede from my purpoſe of awaking in terrors my ſlumbering charmer? And what doſt think was the matter?

I'll tell thee—

At a little after two, when the whole houſe was ſtill, or ſeemed to be ſo, and, as it proved, my Clariſſa in bed, and faſt aſleep; I alſo in a manner undreſſed (as indeed I was for an hour before) and in my gown and ſlippers, though, to oblige thee, writing on;—I was alarmed by a trampling noiſe over head, and a confuſed buz of mixed voices, ſome louder than others, like ſcolding, and little ſhort of ſcreaming. While I was wondering what could be the matter, down ſtairs ran Dorcas, and at my door, in an accent rather frightedly and hoarſely inward, than ſhrilly clamorous, ſhe cried out, 'Fire! fire!' And this the more alarmed me, as ſhe ſeemed to endeavour to cry out louder, but could not.

My pen (it's laſt ſcrawl a benediction on my beloved) dropt from my fingers; and up ſtarted I; and making but three ſteps to the door, opening it, I cried out, 'Where! where!' almoſt as much terrified as the wench: while ſhe, more than half-undreſſed, her petticoats in her hand, unable to ſpeak diſtinctly, pointed up ſtairs.

I was there in a moment, and found all owing to the careleſſneſs of Mrs. Sinclair's cook-maid, who having ſat up to read the ſimple *Hiſtory of Doraſtus and Faunia* when ſhe ſhould have been in bed, had ſet fire to an old pair of callico window-curtains.

She had had the preſence of mind, in her fright, to tear down the half-burnt valens, as well as curtains, and had got them, though blazing, into the chimney, by the time I came up; ſo that I had the ſatisfaction to find the danger happily over.

Mean time Dorcas, after ſhe had directed me up ſtairs, not knowing the worſt was over, and expecting every minute the houſe would be in a blaze, out of tender regard for her lady, [*I ſhall for ever love the wench for it*] ran to her door, and rapping loudly at it, in a recovered voice, cried out, with a ſhrillneſs equal to her love, '*Fire! fire!—The houſe is on fire!—Riſe, Madam!—This inſtant riſe—if you would not be burnt in your bed!*'

No ſooner had ſhe made this dreadful outcry, but I heard her lady's door, with haſty violence, unbar, unbolt, unlock, and open, and my charmer's voice ſounding like that of one going into a fit.

Thou mayeſt believe that I was greatly affected. I trembled with concern for her, and haſtened down faſter than the alarm of fire had made me run up, in order to ſatisfy her, that all the danger was over.

When I had *flown down* to her chamber-door, there I beheld the moſt charming creature in the world, ſupporting herſelf on the arm of the gaſping Dorcas, ſighing, trembling, and ready to faint, with nothing on but an under-

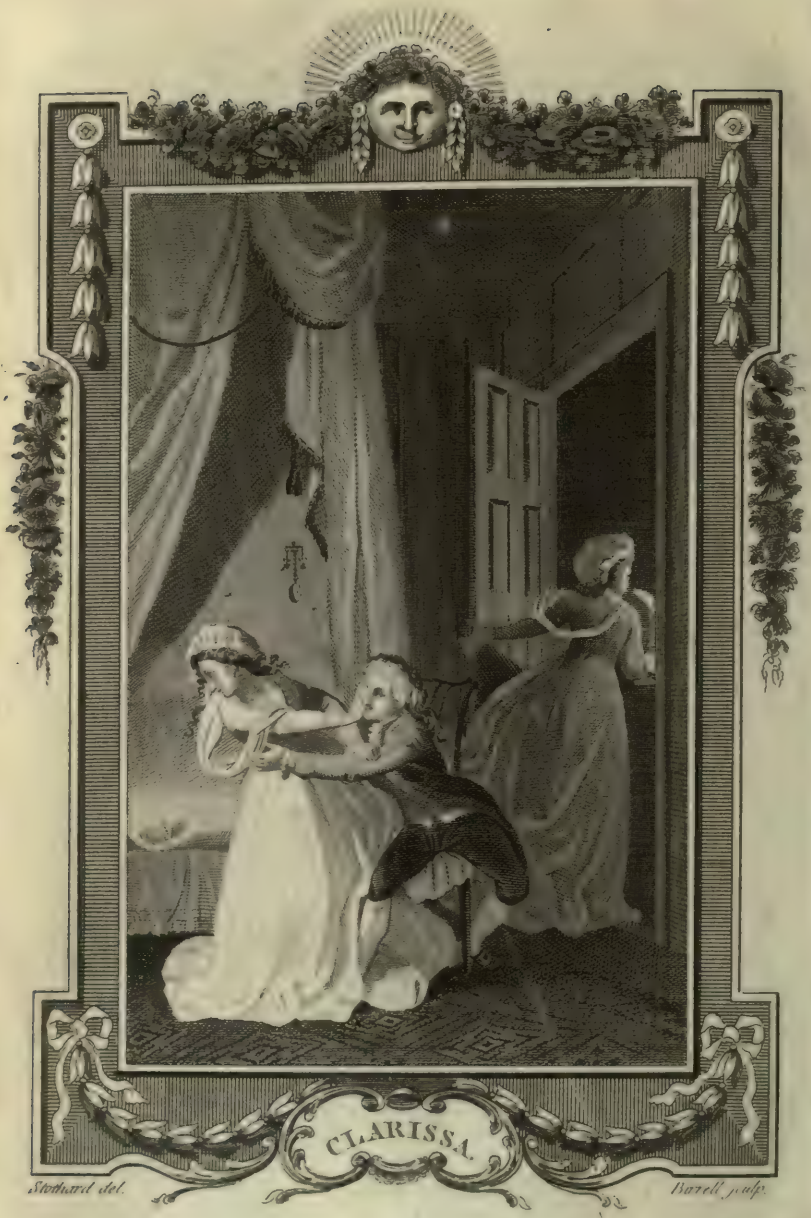

Plate XXIII. Published as the Act directs, by Harrison & Co. May 22 1784

under-petticoat, her lovely bosom half-open, and her feet just slipt into her shoes. As soon as she saw me, she panted, and struggled to speak; but could only say, 'Oh, Mr. Lovelace!' and down was ready to sink.

I clasped her in my arms with an ardour she never felt before: 'My dearest 'life! fear nothing: I have been up— 'The danger is over—The fire is got 'under—And how, foolish devil!' [to Dorcas] 'could you thus, by your hi- 'deous yell, alarm and frighten my 'angel!'

O Jack! how her sweet bosom, as I clasped her to mine, heaved and panted! I could even distinguish her dear heart flutter, flutter, flutter against mine; and for a few minutes, I feared she would go into fits.

Lest the half-lifeless charmer should catch cold in this undress, I lifted her to her bed, and sat down by her upon the side of it, endeavouring with the utmost tenderness, as well of action as expression, to dissipate her terrors.

But what did I get by this my generous care of her, and by my *successful* endeavour to bring her to herself?—Nothing (ungrateful as she was!) but the most passionate exclamations: for we had both already forgotten the occasion, dreadful as it was, which had thrown her into my arms: I, from the joy of incircling the almost disrobed body of the loveliest of her sex; she, from the greater terrors that arose from finding herself in my arms, and both seated on the bed, from which she had been so lately frighted.

And now, Belford, reflect upon the distance at which the watchful charmer had hitherto kept me: reflect upon my love, and upon my sufferings for her: reflect upon her vigilance, and how long I had lain in wait to elude it; the awe I had stood in, because of her frozen virtue and over-niceness; and that I never before was so happy with her; and then think how ungovernable must be my transports in those happy moments!—And yet, in my own account, I was both decent and generous.

But, far from being affected, as I wished, by an address so fervent, (although from a man for whom she had so lately owned a regard, and with whom, but an hour or two before, she had parted with so much satisfaction) I never saw a bitterer or more moving grief, when she came fully to herself.

She appealed to Heaven against my *treachery*, as she called it; while I, by the most solemn vows, pleaded my own equal fright, and the reality of the danger that had alarmed us both.

She conjured me, in the most solemn and affecting manner, by turns threatening and soothing, to quit her apartment, and permit her to hide herself from the light, and from every human eye.

I besought her pardon, yet could not avoid offending; and repeatedly vowed, that the next morning's sun should witness our espousals: but, taking, I suppose, all my protestations of this kind as an indication that I intended to proceed to the last extremity, she would hear nothing that I said; but redoubling her struggles to get from me, in broken accents, and exclamations the most vehement, she protested, that she would not survive what she called a treatment so disgraceful and villainous; and, looking all wildly round her, as if for some instrument of mischief, she espied a pair of sharp-pointed scissars on a chair by the bed-side, and endeavoured to catch them up, with a design to make her words good on the spot.

Seeing her desperation, I begged her to be pacified; that she would hear me speak but one word; declaring that I intended no dishonour to her: and having seized the scissars, I threw them into the chimney; and she still insisting vehemently upon my distance, I permitted her to take the chair.

But, O the sweet discomposure!—Her bared shoulders, and arms so inimitably fair and lovely: her spread hands crossed over her charming neck; yet not half concealing it's glossy beauties: the scanty coat, as she rose from me, giving the whole of her admirable shape, and fine-turn'd limbs: her eyes running over, yet seeming to threaten future vengeance: and at last her lips uttering what every indignant look and glowing feature portended; exclaiming as if I had done the worst I could do, and vowing never to forgive me; wilt thou wonder if I resumed the incensed, the already too-much-provoked fair-one?

I did; and clasped her once more to my bosom: but, considering the delicacy

eacy of her frame, her force was amazing, and shewed how much in earnest she was in her resentment; for it was with the utmost difficulty that I was able to hold her: nor could I prevent her sliding through my arms, to fall upon her knees: which she did at my feet: and there, in the anguish of her soul, her streaming eyes lifted up to my face with supplicating softness, hands folded, dishevelled hair; for her night head-dress having fallen off in her struggling, her charming tresses fell down in naturally shining ringlets, as if officious to conceal the dazzling beauties of her neck and shoulders; her lovely bosom too heaving with sighs, and broken sobs, as if to aid her quivering lips, in pleading for her—In this manner, but when her grief gave way to her speech, in words pronounced with that emphatical propriety, which distinguishes this admirable creature in her elocution from all the women I ever heard speak; did she implore my compassion, and my honour.

'Consider me, *dear* Lovelace,' [*dear* was her charming word!] 'on my knees 'I beg you to consider me, as a poor 'creature who has no protector but 'you; who has no defence but your 'honour: by that honour! By your 'humanity! By all you have vowed! I 'conjure you not to make me abhor 'myself!—Not to make me vile in my 'own eyes!'

I mentioned to-morrow as the happiest day of my life.

'Tell me not of to-morrow. If indeed you mean me honourably, *now*, 'this very instant NOW! you must 'shew it, and be gone! You can never 'in a whole long life repair the evils 'you may NOW make me suffer.

'Wicked wretch!—Insolent villain!' —Yes, she called me insolent villain, although so much in my power! And for what?—only for kissing *(with passion indeed)* her inimitable neck, her lips, her cheeks, her forehead, and her streaming eyes, as this assemblage of beauties offered itself at once to my ravished sight; she continuing kneeling at my feet as I sat.

If I *am* a villain, Madam—' And then my grasping, but trembling hand —I hope I did not hurt the tendereſt and loveliest of all her beauties—' If I *am* 'a villain, Madam—'

She tore my ruffle, shrunk from my happy hand, with amazing force and agility, as with my other arm I would have incircled her waist.

'Indeed you are!—The worst of vil-'lains!—Help! dear blessed people!' and screamed—'No help for a poor 'creature!'

'*Am* I then a villain, Madam?—'*Am* I then a villain, say you?'—and clasped both my arms about her, offering to raise her to my bounding heart.

'O no!—And yet you are!'—And again I was her *dear* Lovelace!—Her hands again clasped over her charming bosom: 'Kill me! Kill me!—If I am 'odious enough in your eyes, to deserve 'this treatment; and I will thank you! '—Too long, much too long, has my 'life been a burden to me!—Or,' wildly looking all round her, 'give me 'but the means, and I will instantly 'convince you, that my honour is 'dearer to me than my life!'

Then, with still folded hands, and fresh streaming eyes, I was her *blessed* Lovelace; and she would thank me with her latest breath, if I would permit her to make that preference, or free her from further indignities.

I sat suspended for a moment: 'By 'my soul,' thought I, 'thou art, upon 'full proof, an angel and no woman!' Still, however, close clasping her to my bosom, as I had raised her from her knees, she again slid through my arms, and dropt upon them:—'See, Mr. 'Lovelace!—Good God! that I should 'live to see this hour, and to bear this 'treatment!—See at your feet a poor 'creature, imploring your pity, who, 'for your sake, is abandoned of all the 'world! Let not my father's curse thus 'dreadfully operate! Be not *you* the in-'flicter, who have been the *cause* of it: 'but spare me, I beseech you spare me! '—For how have I deserved this treat-'ment from you?—For *your own sake*, 'if not for *my sake*, and as you would 'that God Almighty, in your last hour, 'should have mercy upon *you*, spare 'me!'

What heart but must have been penetrated?

I would again have raised the dear suppliant from her knees; but she would not be raised, till my softened mind, she said, had yielded to her prayer, and bid her rise to be innocent.

'Rise then, my angel! Rise, and 'be what you are, and all you wish 'to

'to be! Only pronounce me pardoned 'for what has paſſed, and tell me you 'will continue to look upon me with 'that eye of favour and ſerenity which 'I have been bleſſed with for ſome days 'paſt, and I will ſubmit to my beloved 'conquereſs, whoſe power never was 'at ſo great an height with me, as now, 'and retire to my apartment.'

'God Almighty,' ſaid ſhe, 'hear 'your prayers in your moſt arduous 'moments, as you have heard mine! 'And now leave me, this moment 'leave me, to my own recollection: in '*that* you will leave me to miſery 'enough, and more than you ought to 'wiſh to your bittereſt enemy.'

'Impute not every-thing, my beſt 'beloved, to deſign, for deſign it was 'not.'

'O, Mr. Lovelace!'

'Upon my ſoul, Madam, the fire 'was real.'—[*And ſo it was, Jack!*] '—The houſe, my deareſt life, might 'have been conſumed by it, as you 'will be convinced in the morning by 'ocular demonſtration.'

'O, Mr. Lovelace!'

'Let my paſſion for you, Madam, 'and the unexpected meeting of you 'at your chamber-door, in an attitude 'ſo charming—'

'Leave me, leave me, this moment! 'I beſeech you leave me;' looking wildly and in confuſion about her, and upon herſelf.

'Excuſe me, deareſt creature, for 'thoſe liberties, which, innocent as 'they were, your too great delicacy 'may make you take amiſs.'

'No more!—No more!—Leave me, 'I beſeech you!' Again looking upon herſelf, and round her, in a ſweet confuſion—'Be gone! Be gone!'

Then weeping, ſhe ſtruggled vehemently to withdraw her hands, which all the while I held between mine.—Her ſtruggles!—O what additional charms, as I now reflect, did her ſtruggles give to every feature, every limb, of a perſon ſo ſweetly elegant and lovely!

'Impoſſible, my deareſt life, till 'you pronounce my pardon!—Say 'but you forgive me!—Say but you 'forgive me!'

'I beſeech you, be gone! Leave 'me to myſelf, that I may think what 'I *can* do, and what I *ought* to do.'

'That, my deareſt creature, is not 'enough. You muſt tell me, that I 'am forgiven; that you will ſee me 'to-morrow, as if nothing had hap-'pened.'

And then I claſped her again in my arms, hoping ſhe would not forgive me—

'I will—I do forgive you.—Wretch 'that you are!'

'Nay, my Clariſſa! And is it ſuch 'a reluctant pardon, mingled with a 'word ſo upbraiding, that I am to 'be put off with, when you are thus' [Claſping her cloſe to me] 'in my 'power?'

'I do, I *do* forgive you!'

'Heartily?'

'Yes, heartily!'

'And freely?'

'Freely!'

'And will you look upon me to-'morrow as if nothing had paſſed?'

'Yes, yes!'

'I cannot take theſe peeviſh affirma-'tives, ſo much like intentional nega-'tives!—Say you will, upon your ho-'nour.'

'Upon my honour, then—O now, 'be gone! be gone!—And never, ne-'ver—'

'What, never, my angel!—Is this 'forgiveneſs?'

'Never,' ſaid ſhe, 'let what has 'paſſed be remembered more!'

I inſiſted upon one kiſs to ſeal my pardon—And retired like a fool, a woman's fool, as I was!—I ſneakingly retired!—Couldſt thou have believed it?

But I had no ſooner entered my own apartment, than, reflecting upon the opportunity I had loſt, and that all I had gained was but an encreaſe of my own difficulties; and upon the ridicule I ſhould meet with below upon a weakneſs ſo much out of my uſual character; I repented, and haſtened back, in hope, that through the diſtreſs of mind which I left her in, ſhe had not ſo ſoon faſtened the door; and I was fully reſolved to execute all my purpoſes, be the conſequence what it would; 'For,' thought I, 'I have already ſinned be-'yond *cordial* forgiveneſs, I doubt; 'and if fits and deſperation enſue, I 'can but marry at laſt, and then I 'ſhall make her amends.'

But I was juſtly puniſhed; for her door

door was fast: and hearing her sigh and sob, as if her heart would burst, 'My 'beloved creature,' said I, rapping gently, [Her sobbings then ceasing] 'I want but to say three words to you, 'which must be the most acceptable 'you ever heard from me. Let me see 'you but for one moment.'

I thought I heard her coming to open the door, and my heart leapt in that hope; but it was only to draw another bolt, to make it still the faster; and she either could not or would not answer me, but retired to the further end of her apartment, to her closet probably: and more like a fool than before, again I sneaked away.

This was my mine, my plot! And this was all I made of it!

I love her more than ever!—And well I may!—Never saw I polished ivory so beautiful as her arms and shoulders; never touched I velvet so soft as her skin: her virgin bosom—O Belford! she is all perfection! Then such an elegance!—In her struggling losing her shoe, (but just slipt on, as I told thee) her pretty foot equally white and delicate as the hand of any other woman, or even as her own hand!

But seest thou not that I have a claim of merit for a grace that every-body hitherto had denied me? And that is, for a capacity of being moved by prayers and tears—Where, where, on this occasion, was the *callus*, where the flint, by which my heart was said to be surrounded?

This, indeed, is the first instance, in the like case, that ever I was wrought upon. But why? *Because, I never before encountered a resistance so much in earnest*: a resistance, in short, so irresistible.

What a triumph has her sex obtained in my thoughts by this trial, and this resistance?

But if she can *now* forgive me—*Can!*—She *must*. Has she not upon her honour already done it?—But how will the dear creature keep that part of her promise, which engages her to see me in the morning, as if nothing had happened?

She would give the world, I fancy, to have the first interview over!—She had not best reproach me—Yet *not* to reproach me!—What a charming puzzle!—Let her break her word with me at her peril. Fly me she cannot—No appeals lie from my tribunal—What friend has she in the world, if my compassion exert not itself in her favour?—And then the worthy Captain Tomlinson, and her uncle Harlowe, will be able to make all up for me, be my *next* offence what it will.

As to thy apprehensions of her committing any rashness upon herself, whatever she might have done in her passion if she could have seized upon her scissars, or found any other weapon, I dare say, there is no fear of that from her *deliberate* mind. A man has trouble enough with these truly pious, and truly virtuous girls; [*Now I believe there are such*] he had need to have some benefit *from*, some security *in*, the rectitude of their minds.

In short, I fear nothing in this lady but grief: yet that's a slow worker, you know; and gives time to pop in a little joy between it's sullen fits.

END OF THE FOURTH VOLUME.

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